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A hostage runs to safety after she escaped from a cafe under siege in the central business district of Sydney, Australia, on Monday.

Rob Griffin/AP



UNDER SIEGE

Gunman, two others dead in Australia hostage crisis » Page 10

US Marine charged in the slaying of Filipina

By JIM GOMEZ
The Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine government prosecutors charged a U.S. Marine with murder Monday in the killing of a Filipina, saying the suspect acknowledged attacking the victim after he found out she was a transgender woman.

Prosecutor Emilie de los Santos said there was "probable cause" that Marine Pfc. Joseph Scott Pemberton, who has been detained since shortly after the October incident, killed Jennifer Laude, whose former name was Jeffrey, in the motel room where the victim's body was found in Olongapo city, northwest of Manila. She had apparently been strangled and drowned in a toilet bowl.

"It's murder," de los Santos told reporters after filing the charge against the 19-year-old Pemberton before a regional court. "It was aggravated by treachery, abuse of superior strength and cruelty."

Among the evidence submitted by de los Santos and other prosecutors were statements by Pemberton's three Marine colleagues who went bar-hopping with him on Oct. 11 in Olongapo.

SEE MURDER ON PAGE 2

Old disputes keep Japan, South Korea from forging stronger ties

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — There was little fanfare when a dozen retired South Korean air force officers visited Japan's Air Defense Command Headquarters last month.

The courtesy call — sponsored by an

old-boys club for retired Japanese generals — is the sort of thing that U.S. diplomats would like to see happen more often. They're trying to persuade America's two closest allies in northern Asia to cooperate and to counter a rising China and an unpredictable North Korea.

Unfortunately, sour relations between Japan and South Korea have festered for

years over disputed offshore islands and the Japanese Imperial Army's use of Korean "comfort women" during World War II.

Last month, Japan's most-read daily newspaper, The Yomiuri Shimbun, added to the tumult by apologizing for the use of the term "sex slaves" in stories about the women who were forced to work in brothels frequented by Japanese soldiers during

the war.

While the apology is in line with conservative Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's efforts to restore pride in Japanese history, it won't win the Yomiuri Shimbun friends in South Korea, where some of the women have been campaigning for years to get compensation from Japan.

SEE DISPUTES ON PAGE 4

PACIFIC

South Korean city says delayed US relocation is hurting its economy

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FACES

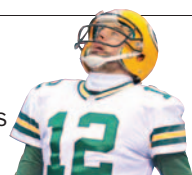
Bill Cosby breaks silence on the media, his wife

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NFL

Packers, Browns falter as Cowboys rally and Patriots romp in Week 14 Takeaways

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Europe: Ukraine considering new push for NATO membership » Page 2

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"This is a one-off random individual. It's not a concerted terrorism event or act. It's a damaged-goods individual who's done something outrageous."

— Manny Conditis, former lawyer of an Iranian-born gunman who held hostages in a Sydney cafe for more than 16 hours

See story on Page 10

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MILITARY

Ukraine eyeing NATO membership

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Ukraine's prime minister on Monday called for more NATO support to reform its military as the country's crisis with Russia has given new life to a once-abandoned effort to eventually join the U.S.-led alliance.

"I do remember nine months ago when we said NATO membership is not yet on our radar," Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk said during a news conference at NATO headquarters in Brussels. "I will tell you the screen of this radar has entirely changed."

The presence of Russian tanks, howitzers and soldiers in eastern Ukraine, where pro-Russia separatists have been battling Ukrainian forces, has changed the security equation in the country, Yatsenyuk said. Russia has denied sending troops or weapons to the separatists.

However, Yatsenyuk acknowledged the path toward NATO membership — for which the alliance sets a series of benchmarks that can take years to implement — could be a long one.

"We need to pass reforms and implement reforms that are needed... to meet all standards and criteria that apply to all NATO states," he said. "This is the road map and we will follow this road map."

Any decision on further NATO expansion also requires unanimous support of all 28 members. In the past, Germany and several other countries have expressed opposition to accepting new members from the former Soviet Union, which Russia still regards as part of its sphere of influence.

During Yatsenyuk's talks with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, the prime minister also requested additional support in reviewing and shaping Ukraine's defense and national security strategy, Yatsenyuk said.

"We need to modernize and overhaul [the]



Yves Loigne/AP

European Council President Donald Tusk, right, welcomes Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk ahead of a meeting Monday in Brussels.

Ukrainian military."

Despite a shaky cease-fire, tensions between Russia and Ukraine and between Russia and the West continue to simmer. In the past week, officials in Poland and Sweden have both complained of a surge in Russian military activity near NATO airspace.

On Friday, Sweden claimed that Russian military intelligence aircraft nearly collided with a civilian aircraft in international airspace, forcing the passenger plane to reroute during a flight south of Sweden. Russia denied that and other allegations of Russian planes repeatedly flying unannounced into international airspace with tracking sensors turned off — a violation of international air traffic rules.

Meanwhile, Russia has accused NATO of violating air traffic rules, something Stolten-

berg rejected.

"I would like to underline all NATO planes are conducting flights in compliance with international safety standards," he said.

In November, NATO officials reported that Russia had sent combat troops into eastern Ukraine, as well as artillery and air defense systems, which some experts have said could be aimed at eventually building a land corridor between the Russian mainland and the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia seized from Ukraine in March.

Russia has denied offering overt support to the rebels, and on Monday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov suggested Ukraine reform its constitution to grant the breakaway regions in eastern Ukraine more autonomy, the Reuters news agency reported.

Stoltenberg called on Russia to live up to a cease-fire deal that calls for an end to hostilities but has gone largely ignored inside Ukraine.

"Today, we have also discussed Russia's continued illegal actions to destabilize Ukraine," Stoltenberg said. "Ukraine has made real efforts to live up to those agreements and we call on Russia to do the same."

As violence between the Ukrainian military and Russia-backed separatists continues, pressure also is mounting on the Obama administration to intensify its support for Ukraine, which so far has been limited to non-lethal aid.

Last week, U.S. lawmakers approved legislation that authorizes but does not require the House to send arms to Ukraine, something that political leaders in Kiev have long sought.

It remains unclear whether President Barack Obama will take the next step and send weapons into the country.

Any decision to send in lethal aid is a bilateral decision and not a matter for NATO consideration, Stoltenberg said.

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Murder: Prosecutors say suspect told companions of attack

FROM FRONT PAGE

A former liberty town when the U.S. Navy was at the vast Subic Bay Naval Base, Olongapo is now a bustling commercial Freeport and recreation hub.

Pemberton and some of his colleagues later picked up women at a disco bar and separately checked in at nearby motels, then returned to their ship after midnight. Witnesses saw Pemberton check in with Laude at a motel

room, where he was seen leaving shortly before the discovery of the killing, prosecutors said in their statement to the court.

Marine Lance Cpl. Jaim Michael Rose, who went out with Pemberton that night, acknowledged that the suspect later confessed back at their ship that he attacked the woman he was with by choking her after discovering that she was transgender when she undressed, according to the prosecutors.

"I think I killed a he/she," Pemberton was quoted as having told Rose.

Pemberton, a skilled boxer, is alleged to have said he choked her from behind with his arm "for a couple of minutes" until she stopped moving, then dragged her into the bathroom, according to the prosecutors.

The new details are likely to spark renewed condemnation by left-wing and transgender groups, which have labeled the attack a

hate crime.

The case comes after the Philippines and the United States strengthened ties with the recent signing of a defense accord that allows greater U.S. access to Philippine military camps.

The accord will help Washington's bid to reassert its presence in Asia, and will enable Manila to deter what it calls China's aggressive moves to reinforce its claims in disputed South China Sea territories.

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PACIFIC

S. Korean city seeks \$2.7B over delayed US move

BY ASHLEY ROWLAND
AND YOO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The mayor of a city near the North Korean border is seeking \$2.7 billion from the South Korean government, claiming the delayed relocation of American troops from Dongducheon is hurting the local economy and redevelopment plans.

City officials say Mayor Oh Se-chang told Defense Minister Han Min-woo that if Dongducheon home to camps Casey and Hovey — doesn't see some show of support from the government by the end of the year, the city will consider holding a large demonstration and a nonbinding referendum on whether U.S. troops should remain there.

Approximately 5,900 soldiers are assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division in Area I, which extends from just north and east of Seoul up to the Demilitarized Zone.

"If U.S. troops want to stay in

Dongducheon, they should be able to help the local economy or at least they should go away," a city official said, speaking on customary condition of anonymity. He said troops should be spending more money at off-post Korean-owned businesses instead of shopping solely at post exchanges or other on-base facilities.

The city also wants the government to establish a task force to "manage and lead" government organizations in support of the city's development plans, according to a document given to Han.

Oh declined an interview through a city spokeswoman, who cited ongoing discussions between the city and U.S. Forces Korea. USFK declined a request for an interview.

Some 1,000 people protested last month near Camp Casey after officials announced plans to keep the 2nd Infantry Division's 210th Field Artillery Brigade there as a residual force when most U.S. troops move to regional bases south of Seoul in 2016 or '17, ac-

cording to South Korea's Yonhap News. Plans to indefinitely delay the transfer of wartime operational control from 2015 and to leave the combined forces headquarters in Seoul until the transfer of operational control takes place were announced at the same time.

Officials cited the North Korean threat as a reason for the delays.

How many troops will stay and whether other units will remain in Area I have not been decided, according to the 8th Army.

USFK Commander Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti told the Association of the Republic of Korea Army last month that the 21D brigade would remain north of the Han River "until the Republic of Korea fields a similar capability," according to a transcript of his comments posted on USFK's website.

While U.S. and South Korean officials have said little publicly about the negotiations that led to the decision to leave the brigade in place, Scaparrotti told reporters a year ago that "there may be a need, operationally, to leave

some residual (troops) in those areas just for proper defense and response."

"It is a sensitive issue, but we will work our way through it and do what is best for Korea and what is best for the defense of Korea," he said.

The city planned to build a university, an industrial complex and parks on land currently used by U.S. forces. But a city official, speaking anonymously, said Dongducheon now believes that plan is "impossible" because of the postponed handover of the bases and wants to develop another area of the city.

He said the city believes it is losing about 43 billion won, or roughly \$39 million, per year as long as troops remain in the city. Much of the money the city is requesting would be used to build infrastructure and other facilities related to Dongducheon's hoped-for industrial complex and for "convenience facilities" including parks, a gymnasium and a culture and

arts center, according to the document given to the defense minister last month.

The official said the declining number of soldiers is hurting the South Korean businesses that used to cater primarily to U.S. troops, but as long as Casey and Hovey remain under U.S. control and prevent the area from being redeveloped, new customers can't move in.

A spokesman for the Ministry of National Defense USFK Base Relocation Office said Han told the mayor he would "do everything he could" to address the matter and that the ministry is considering the compensation request.

The spokesman, who said Casey is currently projected to return to South Korean control around or after 2020, said the ministry seemed to be considering Oh's request favorably. He also said the Defense Ministry has suggested alternate development plans for Casey after U.S. troops leave.

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Disputes: Expert says trilateral cooperation with US to meet China threat is off the table

FROM FRONT PAGE

Ralph Cossa, president of the Pacific Forum think tank in Hawaii, said both Japan and South Korea regard their relationship as extremely important, but he's not optimistic about enhanced cooperation since each country thinks the ball is in the other's court.

If relations were better, South Korea might be more inclined to act in concert with Japan on regional issues such as the North Korean threat, China's military buildup and missile defense. As is, efforts have stalled since the collapse of a joint intelligence-sharing agreement that was approved by Japan but shelved by South Korea amid vocal anti-Japanese opposition in 2012.

Likewise, professor Hajime Izumi, of the School of International Relations at the University of Shizuoka, told reporters in Tokyo recently that meaningful trilateral cooperation with the U.S. is off the table.

"For any trilateral cooperation to take place, the most important would be vis-à-vis China and North Korea," Izumi said. "South Korea cannot accept diplomatic cooperation against these countries with Japan."

South Korea is interested in training with the U.S. only in relation to North Korea, he said, adding, "When it comes to China, South Korea doesn't want to do joint drills with anyone."

The only possibility for trilateral training is when other issues are involved so the participation is diluted, Izumi said.

In July, for example, top generals from Japan, South Korea and the U.S. held talks



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, center, leaves the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo after paying homage to the war dead in 2012. Moves such as that visit have stirred Japan-South Korea relations.

during the Rim of the Pacific exercises in Hawaii that involved personnel from 22 Pacific militaries, including China.

The lack of recent cooperation between South Korea and Japan is partly due to the evolution of their relationship, Izumi said.

"It used to be that Japan was the big power and Korea was a small nation," he said. "Japan was advanced while South Korea was developing."

In those days, Japan felt generous and South Korea had an inferiority complex.

"They would complain and make anti-Japanese comments, but in the end, they would beg Japan to solve the problem," he said.

Rapid advances in South Korea's economy and standard of living at a time when Japan's economy has stagnated and its population is shrinking has put the two nations

on the same level, Izumi said.

"Today, there is no generosity from Japan, which can't afford it, and South Korea thinks it doesn't need Japan anymore," he said.

Japan is being eclipsed by China, which has become South Korea's biggest trade partner, he said.

Last month, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Park Geun-hye, of South Korea, signed off on the outlines of a free-trade agreement that is expected to take effect next year. Trade between the two nations was worth \$202 billion last year, according to Korean data reported by The Wall Street Journal.

South Koreans also regard China as their most important partner when it comes to efforts to reunify with the North, Izumi said.

South Korea's tilt toward China worries some in Japan.

"The best way to put the brake on the China tilt is to improve Japan-South Korea relations," Izumi said, but he added that South Korea first wants Japan to accept its interpretation of World War II history, with an emphasis on the Imperial Army's poor behavior.

Still, there are some signs that South Korea still cares about its relationship with Japan. South Korea went ahead with annual drills last month to defend the disputed offshore islands — known as Dokdo by South Korea administrators and Takeshima by Japan. But South Korea has shelved plans to build a shelter on one of the islands amid concerns that it could add to friction.

Bong Young-shik, of the Asian Institute for Policy Studies in Seoul, said the dispute over Dokdo/Takeshima is not in the same league as Japan's conflict with China

over the Senkaku Islands, where there have been numerous clashes between ships and aircraft.

Further, Japan shouldn't feel slighted by improving South Korea-China relations, he said. "It's not a zero-sum [game]. South Korea's goal is to make as many good friends as possible — the U.S., Japan, China and Russia," he said. "It is not Korea choosing one country over another."

So, Korea's trade with China is bigger than its combined trade with the U.S., Japan and Russia. Still, South Koreans regard the U.S. as their top security partner and are aware of the limits of their relationship with China, he said.

When Xi spoke in Seoul in July and highlighted Korean and Chinese suffering at Japan's hands, he was criticized for a selective view of history, which omitted the many times China invaded Korea, Bong said. "South Korea is not blind."

South Korea and Japan still have a number of thorny issues to resolve, but the relationship should be better than the maritime and historical disputes, Bong said.

"There is no denying that the relationship now is at a low point in history, but this is a growing pain," he said. "During the Cold War, these issues weren't talked about because deterring communism was the priority. Now the countries are in a different international environment. This is a long-term process for these countries to come up with fundamental settlements to these issues."

Stars and Stripes staffer Ashley Rowland contributed to this report.

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WAR ON TERRORISM

Islamic fighters overtake army bases in Syria

By BASSEM MROUE
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — Al-Qaida-linked and other Islamic fighters captured two key Syrian army bases on Monday in the northwestern province of Idlib after two days of intense battles with government troops that killed dozens on both sides, activists said.

The fall of the two bases — Wadi Deif and Hamidiyeh, both near the town of Maaret al-Numan — is a significant blow to the Syrian army, which had managed to hold on to them for more than two years, repelling repeated attacks by an array of opposition groups.

The battles for “these two bases were exhausting the rebel factions,” said Hussam Abu Bakr, a spokesman for the ultraconservative Ahrar al-Sham group, one of the strongest rebel factions in northern Syria. He said his group captured Hamidiyeh base.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and an Idlib-based activist who goes by the name of Mohammed al-Sayid said members of the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front and other rebel factions captured the Wadi Deif base Monday morning

and the nearby Hamidiyeh base in the early afternoon.

Abu Bakr told The Associated Press via Skype that government forces first withdrew from Wadi Deif to Hamidiyeh and then from Hamidiyeh to the nearby village of Bsida.

Then, the rebels captured Bsida, forcing government forces to gather in the village of Maar Hattat, which is now being besieged, said Abu Bakr. “There are more deaths and more prisoners every hour,” he added.

The Observatory said that at least 31 government soldiers and 12 opposition fighters have been killed in the clashes since Sunday. The group, which tracks the fighting in Syria through a network of activists on the ground, said rebel factions also captured about 15 government troops.

Government forces have suffered enormous losses at the hands of Islamic extremists in northern Syria. Earlier this year, members of the Islamic State group took over a string of government air bases in the northern province of Raqa, slaughtering scores of Syrian soldiers after seizing them.

A Twitter account run by the



Jihadi fighters from the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front and other rebel factions rest Sunday after clashes with Syrian troops in Wadi Deif in the northwestern province of Idlib, Syria.

Nusra Front in Idlib province said fighters are now removing mines from the area after the “Wadi Deif camp was liberated.”

Rebels and the Nusra Front control much of the countryside of Idlib province while government forces dominate the provincial capital — also called Idlib.

The capture of the bases came a day after rebels and Nusra Front fighters took over seven government checkpoints around Wadi

Deif and Hamidiyeh.

Idlib-based activist Asaad Kanjo said the government still holds the town of Ariha in Idlib as well as the Qarmid base near the provincial capital.

The Nusra Front has become one of the most powerful factions in Idlib province after last month defeating the moderate Syria Revolutionaries Front headed by Jamal Maarouf, who has since fled the area.

EU vows aid to help rebuild in Syria

By JOHN-THOR DAHLBURG
The Associated Press

BRUSSELS — European Union countries pledged their assistance Monday to help rebuild basic services and local government in the northern Syrian city of Aleppo if a U.N. plan to halt the fighting there can be implemented.

The success of the plan “is crucial for political reasons, for security reasons, for the refugees,” EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said. “And also as a symbol of what Syria can be and what Syria should not be.”

Meeting in Brussels, foreign ministers of the 28 EU nations expressed full commitment to U.N. Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura’s efforts to seek localized “freezes of hostility” in Syria.

On Sunday, the ministers held a separate meeting with de Mistura.

In a statement, the ministers said “the EU will seek ways to provide practical support to his efforts, notably by contributing to the revival of local governance and administration, to the restoration of basic services and to the return to normalcy in areas of reduced violence, in particular in Aleppo, as conditions allow.”

However, the ministers expressed serious concerns over what they said was intensified military action against opposition forces by Syrian President Bashar Assad, which they called a threat to the U.N. plan.

The ministers also said that there to be a reduction of violence, effective monitoring is needed, preferably under U.N. Security Council auspices.

“The EU recalls that cases of forced recruitment imposed by his Assad regime, together with starvation sieges were labeled fallaciously as local cease-fires in the past,” the ministers said.

The European Union has mobilized \$3.7 billion to date for humanitarian assistance to Syria and neighboring countries affected by the 3½ years of fighting there.

The bloc vows de Mistura’s efforts to achieve a strategic de-escalation of violence as a basis for a political process that could lead to the end of the Assad regime.

Europe’s response to Syria returnees raises concern

By GRIFF WITTE
The Washington Post

BIRMINGHAM, England — As a prisoner at Guantanamo Bay, Moazzam Begg’s only escape was in his dreams — his nightly chance to leave the grim confines of his U.S. military cell to return to his family in England.

But after being held for seven months this year at a maximum-security British prison on terrorism charges that ultimately were dropped, Begg, now free, has seen his dreams turn to nightmares. He’s been imprisoned for nearly four years on three continents by the West’s two leading powers, all without a trial.

Amid a new wave of terrorism-related anxiety sweeping Europe as fighters return from Syria, he fears it’s only a matter of time before he’s arrested again.

“How many prisons? How many police stations? How many secret detention sites are they going to put me in, and then not try me? And then not give me my day in court?” said Begg, his face scarred by the beatings he said he endured while in U.S. custody.

Begg, soft-spoken and small in stature, has long been a vocal critic of the sort of post-9/11 brutality that was documented this month in chilling detail by the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee’s report on CIA torture.

But his most recent detention has become emblematic here of what human rights groups, Muslim leaders, terrorism experts and even security officials say is an overzealous response to the threat posed by European re-

turnees from Syria.

The threat, itself, is undeniable: Thousands of Europeans have flocked to Syria to fight the regime of President Bashar Assad, and many have linked up with the Islamic State or other extremist groups.

Speaking on propaganda videos from the battlefield, European fighters have called on their countrymen to carry out attacks at home. When American and British hostages were decapitated, it was a Briton who wielded the knife.

And yet, critics say, European governments may be exacerbating the problem with a heavy-handed response that includes mandatory arrests of returnees, lengthy prison sentences and a policy changed.

“Up until late August last year, the British government was seeking to bomb the Assad regime with airstrikes,” Begg said. “But then the policy changed.”

Nearly a year after his return from Syria, Begg was arrested and charged with attending a terrorist training camp. The case against him collapsed in October after Britain’s main domestic intelligence service, MI5, acknowledged to prosecutors that Begg had told them of his plans before he traveled.

‘You just alienate and isolate people even more if the government is locking people up and throwing away the key.’

Imran Awan
criminologist at
Birmingham City
University

lack of lighter alternatives, including reintegrating programs.

“Arresting and prosecuting people doesn’t really tackle the root causes of the problem,” said Imran Awan, a criminologist at Birmingham City University who studies counterterrorism strategies. “You just alienate and isolate people even more if the government is locking

people up and throwing away the key.”

Policies are expected to get tougher in the months ahead as several governments push legislation authorizing new powers to seize passports. In Britain, the government has fast-tracked a bill that could prevent former fighters from returning home for up to two years, temporarily stripping them of their rights as British citizens.

Experts say the policies fail to distinguish between hardened extremists who pose a legitimate threat to the West and those who travel to Syria for other reasons, including humanitarian concerns and an interest in toppling a Western enemy: Assad.

Begg was arrested in February on charges stemming from his travels to Syria in 2012 and early 2013, before the Islamic State existed in its current form. In an interview in his native Birmingham, Begg, 46, said he never fought, but he acknowledged working with some of the rebels that Britain, the United States and the West were backing in their struggle against the Syrian dictator.

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WAR ON TERRORISM



Former President Aleksander Kwasniewski, left, and former Prime Minister Leszek Miller were in power in Poland when the CIA ran a secret prison in their country. Lawyers say U.S. government officials could be at risk of prosecution in countries where "enhanced interrogations" of terrorism suspects occurred.

CZAREK SOKOLOWSKI/AP

CIA report revives legal debate on interrogation

By ERIC TUCKER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — When the CIA sought permission to use harsh interrogation methods on a captured al-Qaida operative, the response from Bush administration lawyers was encouraging, even clinical.

In one of several memos forming the legal underpinnings for brutal interrogation techniques, the CIA was told Abu Zubaydah could lawfully be placed in a box with an insect, kept awake for days at a time and slapped multiple times in the face. Waterboarding, too, was acceptable because it didn't cause the lengthy mental anguish needed to meet the legal standard of torture, the 2002 Justice Department memo says.

The release last week of a Senate report cataloging years of such interrogation tactics has revived debate about legal opinions since discredited and withdrawn and about the decision to not prosecute the program's architects or officers who used the methods. Civil rights groups in the United States and abroad are renewing calls to prosecute those who relied on techniques that President Barack Obama has called torture.

"How can we seriously use the phrase 'rule of law' if crimes of this magnitude go uninvestigated and unprosecuted?" said Jameel Jaffer, deputy legal director at the American Civil Liberties Union.

The Justice Department, which spent years looking into the matter, says it lacks sufficient evidence to convict anyone and found no new information in the

report. It also is far from clear that any international case could be brought.

Department officials said they will not revisit their 2012 decision to close the investigation, citing among other challenges the passage of time and the difficulty of proving beyond a reasonable doubt that crimes were committed, especially in light of government memos that gave interrogators extraordinary latitude.

"Our inquiry was limited to a determination of whether prosecutable offenses were committed. Importantly, our investigation was not intended to answer the broader questions regarding the propriety of the examined conduct," the department said in a statement after the report was released.

That conclusion followed an investigation led by special prosecutor John Durham that began in 2009 as an outgrowth of a probe into the destruction of videotapes of CIA interrogation tactics. The inquiry into interrogation tactics came amid the release of an internal CIA inspector general's report that said CIA interrogators often threatened to kill the children of a Sept. 11 suspect and suggested that another suspected terrorist would be forced to watch his mother being sexually assaulted.

The investigation focused on instances in which interrogators went beyond what was approved in memos from the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel. The Obama administration had said interrogators would not face charges if they followed legal

guidelines set forth in the memos, which have been withdrawn.

In great detail, the Bush administration memos explored the legality under the federal torture statute of varied interrogation methods contemplated by the CIA. The analysis established parameters for conduct, largely assuring the agency that actions now characterized by Obama as torture were legally permissible. The guidance was sought in the aftermath of Sept. 11, 2001, as the country feared another attack.

CIA Director John Brennan said at a news conference Thursday he was confident the overall interrogation program saved lives.

After the Senate report was released, United Nations officials said U.S. officials and interrogators who authorized or carried out torture must be prosecuted. They said the actions violate the U.N. Convention Against Torture, which the U.S. ratified in 1994 and which bars American personnel from engaging in torture or "cruel, inhuman or degrading" treatment of detainees.

Lawyers say government officials could, theoretically, be at risk of prosecution in foreign countries where the interrogations occurred.

State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki wouldn't discuss whether the U.S. would block other nations from prosecuting American individuals involved in the interrogation program. The Justice Department said if a foreign court takes action, it would raise "jurisdictional and other legal defenses to prevent unwarranted prosecution of U.S. officials."

Former CIA official warns of harm from interrogation report

By STEPHEN BRAUN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate Intelligence Committee's report on coercive tactics betrays intelligence officials and will erode their trust in future presidential administrations, a former CIA official who oversaw the agency's enhanced interrogation program said Sunday.

Jose Rodriguez, who headed the agency's counterterrorism section and its clandestine service, said that the Senate report "throws the CIA under this bus." He predicted that intelligence officials would be undercut by "second-guessing" from the White House and Congress and warned that allied nations that have cooperated with U.S. intelligence in the past might reassess their alliances.

Rodriguez, who authored a memoir of his CIA years, said Sunday that the use of enhanced interrogations under his purview was "one of the most thoroughly reviewed covert action programs in the history of the agency." He raised concerns that "leaders at the agency are going to wonder whether the authorities that they receive from the president will last longer than one election phase."

Rodriguez was among several former senior CIA and Bush administration officials who ap-

peared on Sunday's news shows and tried to cast doubt on the 525-page Senate report, which riveted the American public last week with accounts of brutal interrogations of terrorism detainees that ranged from simulated drowning to improvised executions.

The report spans the creation and four-year history of the CIA's coercive interrogations and secret overseas prisons. Its release last week spawned media attention, international outrage and a carefully coordinated rebuttal that included an official CIA response and critiques from former senior agency officials. Among the critics is Rodriguez, a tough-talking agency veteran who micromanaged the interrogation program and ordered the destruction of videotapes of some waterboarding sessions, according to the Senate report.

The CIA veteran also revived previous claims that Rep. Nancy Pelosi and other top Democratic legislators were thoroughly briefed and approved the program that President Barack Obama now calls torture. Pelosi and other Democrats have denied Rodriguez' claims.

"We came to know very gradually about it," countered Democratic Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, who served on the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Bush administration officials bash report

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Days after a report on George W. Bush-era interrogation techniques concluded that intelligence agencies employed tactics widely regarded as torture, top officials from the Bush White House took to the Sunday morning talk shows to bash the report as partisan and defend the actions of the CIA and other intelligence agencies at the time.

Current and former intelligence officials have sharply defended CIA tactics in the years after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and have insisted that declassifying a report that details counterterrorism tactics was an intelligence agents and troops at risk.

During an appearance on NBC's "Meet the Press," former Vice President Dick Cheney invoked the memory of the Sept. 11 attacks when discussing the interrogation techniques, insisting that while U.S. intelligence agencies did to extract information from terrorism suspects was not torture — instead, he maintained, the terrorist attacks itself were a form of torture for Americans.

"I'd do it again in a minute," Cheney said, backing the CIA's interrogation program and insisting that some techniques described in

the newly released report, specifically "rectal feeding," were done for medical reasons.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., who was subjected to torture as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, remains the most vocal lawmaker to support the release of the report and to criticize the practices detailed in the report as torture.

"Some of these practices fly in the face of everything that America stands for," McCain said on CBS' "60 Minutes." "You can't claim that tying someone to the floor and having them freeze to death is not torture."

The report disputed claims by CIA and Bush administration officials that interrogation techniques used in the waterboarding were directly linked to the killing of Osama bin Laden.

It also raised new questions about whether the CIA lied to Congress and the White House about the techniques.

In fact, he (Bush) says in his book "Decision Points" that he was briefed and intimately involved in this," said Karl Rove, who served as his deputy chief of staff and closest adviser and who said that members of Congress who now maintain they were not informed of the interrogation techniques earlier are not telling the truth.

NATION

Newtown victim's mom speaks out on gun violence

The Associated Press

NEWTOWN, Conn. — The mother of a first-grader killed in the Newtown school shooting rampage spoke out against gun violence Sunday on the second anniversary of the massacre, saying it has broken the hearts of other mothers across the country.

"And just like our hearts were broken and we can't breathe, the hearts of the mothers in Ferguson, in Bridgeport, in Hartford, in Florida, in New Haven, in Danbury, they can't breathe," said Nelba Marquez-Greene, who lost her daughter, Ana Grace, on Dec. 14, 2012.

"And we should care. We should care when our children are lost to gun violence."

Marquez-Greene, speaking at The First Cathedral's church service in Bloomfield, recalled the moment two years ago when she and her husband were in the Newtown firehouse, where officials were informing parents of the 20 children slain along with six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School. She and her husband found their son, now a fifth-grader, but not their daughter.

"But in that same firehouse," she said, "my husband and I knew Ana was with Jesus and that we would see her again."

A troubled 20-year-old gunman had shot his way into the school. He shot and killed his mother before driving to the school, and he committed suicide as police arrived.

Marquez-Greene asked anyone feeling despair and the desire to commit "a senseless act of violence" to ask for prayer and "to

know that we love you."

She said she went to Washington to speak out against gun violence but felt that change would come not from the leaders there but "from us."

Marquez-Greene's husband, Jimmy Greene, a saxophonist and composer who has dedicated a new album, "Beautiful Life," to their daughter, also spoke and played at the service.

'[We should care. We should care when our children are lost to gun violence.]'

Nelba Marquez-Greene
mother of first-grader killed in Newtown, Conn., school shooting

Other churches across Connecticut remembered the victims Sunday as the Newtown community quietly marked the anniversary. At Newtown's St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, bells rang out and the victims' names were read.

The town held no official public memorial events Sunday. Newtown officials said the day would be for private reflection and remembrance.

First Selectman Pat Liodra and school Superintendent Joseph Erardi said in a public letter that the community's recovery has been a "challenging journey, filled with days of joyful hope and occasional dips of despair."



ROBERT F. BURATTI/AP

A makeshift memorial with crosses for the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre stands outside a home in Newtown, Conn., on Sunday, the one-year anniversary of the shootings.

Victims' families sue gun maker, seller

The Associated Press



JESSICA HILL/AP

White roses with the faces of victims of the Sandy Hook shooting are attached to a telephone pole near the school.

HARTFORD, Conn. — The families of nine of the 26 people killed and a teacher injured two years ago at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., filed a lawsuit against the manufacturer, distributor and seller of the rifle used in the shooting.

The negligence and wrongful death lawsuit, filed Monday, asserts that the Bushmaster AR-15 rifle should not have been made publicly available because it is a military weapon unsuited for hunting or home defense.

"The AR-15 was specifically engineered for the United States Military to meet the needs of changing warfare," attorney Josh Koskoff said in a news release. "In

fact, one of the Army's specifications for the AR-15 was that it has the capability to penetrate a steel helmet."

In addition to Bushmaster, the families have named Camfoux, a firearm distributor, and River-view Gun Sales, the store where the Bushmaster rifle was purchased in 2010.

Messages seeking comment from the defendants were not immediately returned.

Bill Sherlach, whose wife, Mary, was killed in the shooting, said he believes in the Second Amendment, but believes the gun industry needs to be held to "standard business practices" when it comes to assuming the risk for producing, making and selling a product.

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NATION

Merriam-Webster chooses 'culture' as word of 2014

By LEANNE ITALIE
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A nation, a workplace, an ethnicity, a passion, an outsized personality. The people who comprise these things, who fawn or rail against them, are behind U.S. dictionary Merriam-Webster's 2014 word of the year: "culture."

The word joins Oxford Dictionaries' "vape," a darling of the e-cigarette movement, and "exposure," declared the year's winner at Dictionary.com during a time of tragedy and fear because of Ebola.

Merriam-Webster based its pick and nine runners-up on significant increases in lookups in 2014 compared with 2013 on Merriam-Webster.com, along with interesting, often culture-driven — if you will — spikes of concentrated interest.

In the No. 2 spot is "nostalgia," during a year of big 50th anniversaries pegged to 1964: the start of the free speech movement, the passage of the Civil Rights Act, the birth of the Ford Mustang and the British Invasion heralded by the landing of the Beatles on U.S. soil for the first time.

Nostalgia was followed by insidious, legacy, feminism and a rare multiword phrase that can be looked up in total, in a foreign language at that: the French "je ne sais quoi," or "a pleasant quality that is hard to describe."

The Springfield, Mass.-based dictionary company filters out perennial favorites when picking

word of the year, but does that formula leave them chasing language fads?

"We're simply using the word 'culture' more frequently," said Peter Sokolowski, editor at large for Merriam-Webster. "It may be a fad. It may not. It may simply be evolution."

Sokolowski noted that the reasons words are looked up aren't just about not knowing what they mean. Sometimes, he said, we seek inspiration or a way to check in on ourselves. Of an estimated 100 million lookups on the website each year and a similar number on the company's app, culture enjoyed a 15 percent year-over-year increase.

Percentage-wise, it doesn't sound like much, but the raw number at that stratosphere is large, Sokolowski said. He wouldn't disclose actual numbers, though, citing the proprietary nature of that data for a company still privately held.

Sokolowski is a lexicographer, not a mind reader, so his observations about why any single word takes off in terms of lookups is well-informed but theoretical.

"The word 'culture' (has) got a cultural story," he said. "We have noticed for years that 'culture' has a cyclical spike every year at around Labor Day. That is to say back-to-school time during the month of September, so we've been watching this word spike at that time for years."

"In recent years, we've seen similar spikes at the end of semesters during finals."

down payment," but said "more funding is necessary to complete the system."

Officials planned to officially announce the funding Monday. A comprehensive statewide system would cost an estimated \$80 million for the first five years of operation.

Seismic early warning systems are designed to detect the first shock waves from a large jolt, calculate the strength and alert people before the slower but damaging waves spread.

From The Associated Press



CLEVELAND CLINIC/AP

Leisha Campbell rests with her newborn daughter, Hazel Grace, along with her husband, Shawn Zimmerman and daughter, Adalynn, at Fairview Hospital in Cleveland on Saturday. Hazel was born at 10:11 a.m. on Dec. 13, 2014, or 12/13/14.

2 newborns, by the numbers

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Two U.S. babies were born at just the right minute: 10:11 on 12/13/14.

Seven-pound, 14-ounce Hazel Grace was born Saturday morning to Leisha Campbell and Shawn Zimmerman at Cleveland's Fairview Hospital. Her family already knew she'd be born on Saturday's special date. They didn't know she'd get the minute right, too.

"Everyone is telling us we should play the lottery," Campbell said. "We feel this is a lucky day and are excited to get family photos with Santa."

Hazel was getting a visit from her three older sisters, Aubree, Adalynn and Josalyn, on Sunday. The family lives in Cleveland.

In Billings, Mont., the time and

date aligned for a baby girl, and the infant's weight came close to making the event even more unique.

Quincy Kessler was born at St. Vincent Healthcare in Billings at 10:11 a.m. on 12/13/14.

Even more remarkable, her birth weight, at 7.84 pounds, almost aligned with the other numbers. A fraction of an ounce more, and she would have weighed 7.89 pounds.

The baby is the second daughter born to Trenton and Melinda Kessler.

Melinda Kessler told The Billings Gazette that nurses in the hospital room noted around 10:05 a.m. that the 10:11 minute might work out. At that point, she said, she started to push and Quincy came out at 10:11.



HANNAH POTES, THE BILLINGS (MONT.) GAZETTE/AP

Melinda Kessler holds her daughters Sofia, 3, and newborn Quincy on Saturday at St. Vincent Healthcare in Billings, Mont. Quincy was also born at 10:11 a.m. on Dec. 13, 2014.

Actor's case points to pardon risks

The Associated Press

BOSTON — Actor Mark Wahlberg's plea for a pardon has focused fresh attention on excusing criminal acts — something governors rarely do because it's so politically risky.

Massachusetts hasn't approved a pardon in more than a decade. Republican Mitt Romney didn't pardon anyone before he left as governor in 2007. Only now, in the twilight of his eight years in office, has Democratic Gov. Deval Patrick recommended any pardons.

"It's hard politics to get pardons before the Governor's Council," Patrick said, referring to the elected body that has the final say.

Patrick, long an outspoken advocate of giving second chances,



Wahlberg

has thrown his support behind four pardons and a commutation as he prepares to turn the office over to Republican Gov.-elect Charlie Baker.

Baker, if approved, they would be the first pardons in Massachusetts since 2002 and the first commuted sentence in 17 years.

Wahlberg isn't among them. His request is pending before the parole board, which hasn't decided whether to grant a hearing or make a recommendation.

The actor is seeking a pardon for violent assaults committed as a troubled teen in Boston in 1988, when he hit a man in the head with a wooden stick while trying to steal alcohol from a convenience store and punched another man in the face while trying to avoid police. He was sentenced to three months in jail and served about 45 days.

In the request, Wahlberg said he dedicated himself to becoming a better person in his adult years so he could be a role model.

But his case underscores the bad politics that pardons can represent for someone like Patrick with potential presidential aspirations. Or, for that matter, for an incoming governor like Baker trying to get a new administration off the ground.

Calif. gets funding for quake warning system

LOS ANGELES — California has received funding to help begin an earthquake warning system across the state next year.

Scientists have tried to make the public alert system available but funding has been a problem. But \$5 million was allocated for the program in a major spending bill approved by Congress, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., called the \$5 million in funding "a



Veteran operator Pike Logan and partner Jennifer Cabill learn that their latest actions have gotten them fired, despite having saved thousands of innocent lives. But their shock and fury are cut short when a terrorist organization starts targeting military relatives — and taking them hostage.

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NATION

Friends: Victim in story urged to call police

By MATT STROUD

The Associated Press

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — Three friends of a reputed victim of gang rape at a University of Virginia frat house say a magazine article wrongly portrayed them as uncaring students who were more concerned about their reputations than her well-being.

Almost a month after the scathing Rolling Stone article was published, Kathryn Hendley, Alex Stock and Ryan Duffin are still trying to set the record straight.

The friends told The Associated Press that the article about a suspected gang rape at a University of Virginia frat house was wrong on a number of key points, especially its assertion that they urged the victim to not report the attack.

Their alleged indifference was woven into a narrative that used the claimed attack to paint a picture of a culture of sexual violence on college campuses in the United States. The article set off an intense debate about sexual violence, alcohol, fraternities and journalism ethics.

Duffin, 20, a third-year student referred to as "Randall" in the Rolling Stone article, told the AP that not only did he encourage the reputed victim to go to police, but he started to call police on his cellphone until she begged off, saying she just wanted to go back to her dorm and go to sleep.

"I couldn't help but notice that everything that the article said about me was incorrect," Duffin said.

The AP also spoke with the



Duffin

None of the three friends was contacted by Rolling Stone's reporter, Sabrina Rubin Erdely, before the article was published, each of them rejected multiple assertions made in the article, for which Rolling Stone has since apologized for and noted discrepancies.

All three say Erdely has since reached out to them, and that she

other two friends portrayed in the article: third-year, 20-year-old U.Va. students Hendley and Stock, known as "Cindy" and "Andy" in the article.

has told them she is re-reporting the story. Hendley told the AP that Erdely apologized to her for portraying her the way she did.

Erdely and Rolling Stone Managing Editor Will Dana did not respond to an email from The Associated Press on Sunday morning seeking comment.

The three friends say they continue to work on correcting the record about what happened that night, and at least one, Duffin, wonders to what extent he believes the victim's own version of what happened — or whether any discrepancies in her story matter.

"People at U.Va. want answers just as much as I do," Duffin said. "But if anything, the takeaway from all this is that I still don't really care if what's presented in this article is true or not because

I think it's far more important that people focus on the issue of sexual assault as a whole."

Other news media also have interviewed the friends, but this is the first time Duffin has allowed his full name to be used. A lawyer representing the victim, who has been identified only as "Jackie," has declined several requests by the AP to interview Jackie and did not immediately respond to a request for comment for this article. The AP does not typically name alleged victims of sexual assault.

The article has roiled the campus and caused a huge backlash, with U.Va. suspending fraternity activities until January, the Board of Visitors appointing an independent investigator to look into the allegations and the university handing the case to police.

Black effigies found hanged on Calif. campus spur debate

The Associated Press

BERKELEY, Calif. — Effigies of black lynching victims found hanging at the University of California, Berkeley have sparked debate over whether the images are powerful protest art or just plain tasteless and racist.

The photographic images were found Saturday morning hanging at two prominent spots on one of the most famous American campuses — especially when it comes to protests. They were discovered a few hours before a demonstration against police brutality organized by a black student union was to start. Police are investigating, but officials say they still don't know who hanged the images or the motivation.

Race relations in the U.S. have been fraught since grand juries in the St. Louis area and New York City recently decided against charging white police officers

linked to the deaths of unarmed blacks. About 300 people participated in a peaceful Berkeley protest Saturday afternoon. Many of them later joined a larger demonstration in Oakland that was mostly peaceful, though police arrested 45 people.

UC Berkeley's leaders released a joint statement Saturday calling on those responsible to come forward.

"While we do not know the intent of the effigies, the impact that it has had on our campus community is undeniable," chancellor Nicholas B. Dirks and provost Claude Steele said in the prepared statement.

Social media sites hosted debates between those who viewed the effigies as art and those offended by the images.

Rodolfo Mendoza-Denton, a UC Berkeley professor of social psychology who studies prejudice

and stereotyping, said he sees no redeeming quality in the images hanged Saturday.

"Given the volatility of the protests, I think it's misguided regardless of the protest," Mendoza-Denton said. "It is inflammatory and is triggering upset and anger."

Others, however, said the effigies may have been a form of "guerrilla art" and that images of lynching victims have been used by artists in the past. The rap group Public Enemy used a photograph of two lynching victims on the cover of the single "Hazy Shade of Criminal" released in 1992.

Leigh Raiford, an associate professor of African American studies at UC Berkeley who has written about lynching photography, said the images may have been hanged as an artistic expression.

Too many drinks? New app may tell you

By AMANDA LEE MYERS

The Associated Press

A new, federally funded cellphone app allows people who may have had one too many to get an idea just how drunk they are — and to hail a ride home.

Users enter their sex, height, weight and number of drinks consumed to help figure out their blood-alcohol level. They also can play two interactive games to test reaction time and cognitive ability. The app uses GPS technology to call cabs and pre-loads phone numbers for potential designated drivers.

The app, called ENDUI — pronounced "Endy Dui" — was announced Thursday by government and police officials in Mary-

land. Funded by federal money reserved for drunken-driving education efforts, the app is among several in a handful of states to tackle drunken driving — though Maryland's is one of the most elaborate.

"It's unique," said Kara Macek, a spokeswoman at the Governors Highway Safety Association, which funded the new app, developed by the Maryland Highway Safety Office for about \$50,000.

"I think states are starting to go that route because they're trying to reach consumers where they are and where they spend time, as advertisers spend time on their phone," Macek said. "I think we're going to see more of that as we go forward."

States with similar apps include New York, New Mexico, Colorado and California, which launched its version two weeks ago.

Like in the other states, Maryland's app is available for free on Android and iPhone.

One of the games on the app involves pressing a red "brake" button when an image of a pedestrian passes by or a car ahead stops. The app says just how fast — or slow — users react and how much time their car would have needed to avoid a collision.

The other game shows nine road signs that blink in different order; users try to recall the order, which gets increasingly challenging with each round — with or without drinks.

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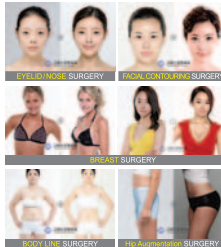
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WORLD

3 killed in Sydney siege

Iranian-born gunman among the dead after 16-hour standoff

By KRISTEN GELINEAU
The Associated Press

SYDNEY — Amid a barrage of gunfire, police stormed a cafe in the heart of Sydney early Tuesday to end a 16-hour hostage siege by an Iranian-born gunman. Police said three people were killed — the gunman and two of the hostages — and four others were wounded.

Police raided the Lindt Chocolate Cafe after they heard a number of gunshots from inside, said New South Wales state police Commissioner Andrew Scipione.

"They made the call because they believed that at that time, if they didn't enter, there would have been many more lives lost," he said.

The gunman was identified as Man Haron Monis, 50, who once was prosecuted for sending offensive letters to families of Australian troops killed in Afghanistan.

Scipione wouldn't say whether the two hostages who were killed — a 34-year-old man and a 38-year-old woman — were caught in crossfire or shot by the gunman. Among the four wounded was a police officer shot in the face.

"Until we were involved in this emergency action, we believe that no one had been injured. That changed. We changed our tactic," he said, adding that there had been a total of 17 hostages taken in the cafe when the siege began.

The standoff ended when a loud bang was heard from the cafe and five people ran out. Shortly after, police swooped in amid heavy gunfire, shouts and flashes. A police bomb disposal robot also was sent into the building, but no explosives were found.

Police said an investigation is underway because police were involved in an incident in which people died.

Local media identified the gunman as Monis, and a police official confirmed his identity. Under department rules, officials do not identify themselves unless speaking at a formal news conference.

Monis has long been on officials' radar. Last year, he was sentenced to 300 hours of community service for using the postal service to send what a judge called "grossly offensive" letters to families of soldiers



People hold up what appears to be a black flag with white Arabic writing on it inside the cafe.

killed in Afghanistan between 2007 and 2009.

At the time, Monis said his letters were "flowers of advice," adding: "Always, I stand behind my beliefs."

He was later charged with being an accessory to the murder of his ex-wife.

Earlier this year, he was charged with the sexual assault of a woman in 2002. He has been out on bail on the charges.

"This is a one-off random individual. It's not a concerted terrorism event or act. It's a damaged-goods individual who's done something outrageous," his former lawyer

Manny Conditis said. Man Haron Monis' former lawyer

yer, Manny Conditis, told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

"His ideology is just so strong and so powerful that it clouds his vision for common sense and objectiveness," Conditis said.

The siege began about 9:45 a.m. in Martin Place, a plaza in Sydney's financial and shopping

district that is packed with holiday shoppers at this time of year.

Hundreds of police blanketed the city as streets were closed and offices evacuated. The public was told to stay away from Martin Place, site of the state premier's office, the Reserve Bank of Australia and the headquarters of two of the nation's largest banks.

Throughout the day, several people were seen with their arms in the air and hands pressed against the window of the cafe, with two people holding up a black flag with the Shahada, or Islamic declaration of faith, written on it.

The Shahada translates as, "There is no god but God and Muhammad is his messenger." It is considered the first of Islam's five pillars of faith and is similar to the Lord's Prayer in Christianity. It is pervasive throughout Islamic culture, including on the green flag of Saudi Arabia. Jihadis have used the Shahada in their own black flag.

Channel 10 news said it received a video in which a hostage in the cafe had relayed the gunman's demands. The station said police requested they not broadcast it and Scipione separately asked all media that might be contacted by the gunman to urge him instead to talk to police.

A number of Australian Muslim groups condemned the hostage-taking in a joint statement and said the flag's inscription was a "testimony of faith that has been misappropriated by misguided individuals."



AP photos

A hostage is carried by police after armed response officers entered a cafe under siege in the central business district of Sydney on Tuesday.

Seven Network television news staff watched the gunman and hostages for hours from a fourth-floor window of their Sydney offices, opposite the cafe.

The gunman could be seen pacing back and forth. Reporter Chris Reason said the man carried what appeared to be a pump-action shotgun, was unshaven and wore a white shirt and a black cap.

Some of the hostages were forced up against the windows.

"The gunman seems to be sort of rotating these people through these positions on the windows with their hands and faces up against the glass," Reason said in a report from the vantage point. "One woman we've counted was there for at least two hours — an extraordinary, agonizing time for

her surely having to stand on her feet for that long.

"When we saw that rush of escapees, we could see from up here in this vantage point the gunman got extremely agitated as he realized those five had got out. He started screaming orders at the people, the hostages who remain behind," he added.

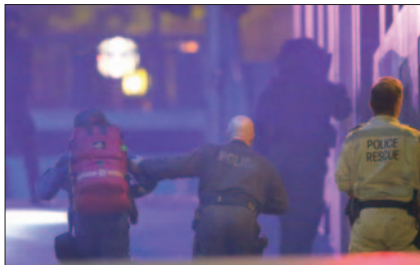
As night set in, the lights inside the cafe were switched off. Armed police guarding the area outside fitted their helmets with green-glowing night goggles.

"This is a very disturbing incident," Prime Minister Tony Abbott said. "It is profoundly shocking that innocent people should be held hostage by an armed person claiming political motivation."

Australia's government raised the country's terrorism warning level in September in response to the domestic threat posed by supporters of the Islamic State group.

The militants, which now hold a third of Syria and Iraq, have threatened Australia in the past. In September, Islamic State group spokesman Abu Mohammed al-Adnani issued an audio message urging so-called "lone wolf" attacks abroad, specifically mentioning Australia. Al-Adnani told Muslims to kill all "disbelievers," whether they be civilians or soldiers.

One terrorism expert said the situation appeared to be that of a "lone wolf" making his own demands, rather than an attack orchestrated by a foreign jihadist group.



Left: Police evacuate people from an office building close to the cafe. Right: A bomb disposal officer, top right, gets ready to enter the building as emergency personnel rush to aid police after shots were fired during the siege.

WORLD

Philippines calls holiday truce with rebels

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippines' military chief on Monday declared a monthlong suspension of military and police offensives against communist guerrillas in observance of the Christmas holidays, but added that assaults against hard-line Muslim militants would continue.

Military and police forces will halt counterinsurgency offensives beginning Thursday and to Jan. 19, Gen. Gregorio P. Catapang said. He urged New People's Army guerrillas to similarly declare a holiday respite on attacks, as they have done in past years.

Catapang said government forces would shift to a defensive posture, but would continue to serve warrants of arrest to insurgents and secure government installations.

UN commission asks for Ebola debt forgiveness

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia — A U.N. commission is asking for more debt cancellations for the three West African nations hardest hit by the Ebola virus.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa said Monday that it is crucial that the current Ebola health crisis not be a catalyst for financial distress in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia.

Carlos Lopez, a U.N. under secretary-general and the executive secretary of the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa, appealed in Ethiopia on Monday for loan forgiveness.

Nicaraguan rescuers find capsized boat

PUERTO CABEZAS, Nicaragua — Rescue crews in Nicaragua have found a fishing boat that capsized in the Caribbean last week with 50 people aboard and are searching for 18 crew members who remain missing, authorities said Sunday.

The MN Wayward Wind was overturned by a huge wave five days ago about 35 nautical miles southeast of Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, survivors said. Thirty-two of those on board either were rescued or managed to reach shore on their own. One survivor later died from sunburn and dehydration.

Denmark claims North Pole via underwater link

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — Denmark says scientific data show a submerged continental shelf is connected to a ridge beneath the Arctic Ocean, giving Danes a claim to the North Pole and any potential energy resources beneath it.

Foreign Minister Martin Lidegaard says Denmark will deliver a claim on Monday to a United Nations panel in New York that will eventually decide control of the area that Russia and Canada are also coveting.

Lidegaard told The Associated Press he hopes the other nations that also have made claims in the Arctic will continue to keep to "the rules of the game."

From The Associated Press

Merkel warns Germans on far right

By FRANK JORDANS
The Associated Press

BERLIN — Chancellor Angela Merkel warned Germans on Monday not to be duped by far-right rhetoric, amid concern about the growing number of people flocking to anti-Islam demonstrations in the country.

A group calling itself Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the West, or PEGIDA, has staged weekly rallies in the eastern city of Dresden that have attracted growing numbers of supporters. Some 10,000 attended the protest last week and more were

expected to attend again Monday.

Although PEGIDA's organizers insist — that they are protesting only against extremism and not against immigrants or Islam itself, the demonstrations have received open support from neo-Nazi groups and far-right parties, prompting concerns that anti-foreigner sentiment might be



Merkel

on the rise again in Germany.

"There's freedom of assembly in Germany, but there's no place for incitement and lies about people who come to us from other countries," Merkel told reporters in Berlin.

"Everyone (who attends) needs to be careful that they're not taken advantage of by the people who organize such events," she added.

Opposition parties have accused Merkel's conservative Union bloc of being too timid in its criticism of the protests up to now, suggesting that she fears losing voters to the far right.

Immigration has emerged as a contentious topic again in Germany, partly due to the recent sharp rise in asylum applications, particularly from Syrians. More than 150,000 people sought refuge in Germany during the first 11 months of the year, an increase of 40,000 compared with 2013.

Last week, fires broke out at three empty buildings earmarked to house asylum seekers, and anti-foreigner slogans and swastikas were painted at one site in Vorr, near Nuremberg. Police said they were treating the fires as arson.



YVES LOGGHE/AP

A man checks a flight information board at Brussels airport Monday as all flights are canceled during a nationwide general strike.

General strike in Belgium paralyzes traffic, idles industry

By RAF CASERT
The Associated Press

BRUSSELS — A general strike paralyzed Belgium's air and rail traffic and idled scores of companies across the country Monday as trade unions capped a month of labor action against government austerity policies.

The strike targeted measures by the nation's business-friendly government to cut into employees' income, extend working time and restrict social services. They also protest the lack of additional capital gains taxes.

"We have not been heard so far," said Socialist trade union leader Rudi De Leeuw. There is talk of extending labor action into the new year, but concrete measures have yet to be put forward.

The strike had an immediate

international impact because Brussels Airport, a busy hub with connections throughout Europe and beyond, had no traffic whatsoever. The high-speed rail links to London and France and the Netherlands also were scrapped for the day.

The series of labor actions, the toughest in years, started last month with a demonstration that drew some 120,000 protesters.

Airport spokeswoman Florence Muls said some 600 flights have been canceled, affecting 50,000 passengers. Going with the Thalys or Eurostar trains was no option either, because the whole rail network was paralyzed.

Almost all activity at Antwerp port, too, was stopped for the day.

From early in the morning, striking workers started small fires at entrances to factories

throughout the nation, discouraging people from working. Some small and medium-sized businesses were able to operate normally.

Because regional strike action already had affected highways into the capital, Brussels, and major cities for the past three weeks, workers took the general strike in stride.

Masses worked from home and the expected traffic jams during the morning rush hour did not materialize.

Other European Union nations also face labor action protesting measures that are widely seen as undercutting the vestiges of Europe's famed welfare state.

Tens of thousands of people demonstrated in several Italian cities last Friday to protest economic reforms that they say erode their social rights.

Bathhouse raid stirs fear in gays in Egypt

By ERIN CUNNINGHAM
The Washington Post

CAIRO — Egypt's government has cracked down aggressively on Islamist and liberal opponents during the past year. Now officials increasingly are targeting another group: gay people.

Police raided a public bathhouse in Cairo this month and arrested at least two dozen men, parading them half-naked in front of television cameras before hauling them off to prison.

It was the latest in a series of police busts at suspected meeting places of homosexuals across the country. Arrests of gay people have been on the rise since President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi seized power in a military coup in 2013, but in recent months the arrests have escalated, rights groups say.

"It's a full-on crackdown on all sorts of freedoms," said a prominent gay-rights activist in Egypt, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the ongoing crackdown. "There is a lot of fear in Egypt's gay community," he said. "Many people want to leave the country."

As a fiercely conservative, largely Muslim society, Egypt has never openly accepted gay or transgender people. In the early 2000s, the government of then-president Hosni Mubarak staged similar raids on gay-friendly hangouts and jailed dozens of people. Gay activists are comparing the current campaign to the darkest days under Mubarak.

Homosexuality is not illegal per se under Egyptian law. But prosecutors charge defendants under a section of the penal code that criminalizes prostitution and debauchery. In April, four men were sentenced to between eight and 12 years in prison each for debauchery after a raid on an all-male party they attended at a villa in a Cairo suburb. About 150 people have been arrested in such raids since 2013, rights groups say.

WORLD



An Israeli flag stands in front of the West Bank Jewish settlement of Maaleh Adumim on the outskirts of Jerusalem in September 2009. The population of Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank has surged during Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's years in office and is a point of contention in the quest for a Mideast peace agreement.

US in bind over Mideast talks

By BRADLEY KLAPPER
The Associated Press

ROME — The Obama administration is in a diplomatic bind on the Mideast as Secretary of State John Kerry meets with top Israeli and Palestinian officials in Europe this week.

The U.S. is reluctant to do anything right now that can be perceived as interference in Israel's election while being pressed by close allies to endorse an Israeli-Palestinian negotiating framework that largely adheres to U.S. policy.

France is drafting a U.N. resolution that proposes a two-year timetable for talks. The draft speaks of the 1967 Mideast borders as the basis for dividing the land, which President Barack Obama has publicly backed, but it doesn't include key Israeli — and U.S. — conditions such as Palestinian recognition of Israel as a Jewish state.

The United States has long opposed the idea of the U.N. Security Council imposing a framework for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. But for Washington, simply vetoing the plan could have pitfalls.

A veto would upset Palestinians and perhaps some Arab allies frustrated by years of diplomatic gridlock. Several are fighting alongside the U.S. right now against the Islamic State group.

A veto would also risk angering France as well as other European countries that want to broaden peace efforts after countless U.S.-led mediation failures. America's credibility as a peace broker could be damaged as a result.

At a White House meeting last week, Obama's top foreign policy aides were unable to agree on an approach to France's potential resolution.

Kerry suggested steering away from the effort at a time of increased Mideast violence and with the Israeli election a couple of months away, according to a U.S. official familiar with the discussion.

Susan Rice, Obama's national security adviser, supported engaging allies to see if a compromise is possible, said the official, but wasn't authorized to speak publicly on the matter.

Kerry was to meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Rome on Monday, followed by the foreign ministers of Britain, France and Germany in Paris. The discussions are to continue Tuesday in London

with top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat and the head of the Arab League.

"Time after time, we have repulsed efforts to dictate conditions which have damaged the security of Israel and which do not comply with real peace," Netanyahu said as he left for Rome.

He said this effort would be the same. "We will rebuff any attempt that would put this terrorism inside our home, inside the state of Israel."

Kerry discussed the escalating tensions in the Middle East on Sunday with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, who told reporters in Italy's capital that it was "crucial... we don't allow the situation to degrade further."

Support within Europe for France's proposal is unclear. French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius is making his case to European Union foreign ministers in Brussels on Monday before his meeting with Kerry. French officials believe the U.S. opposes the draft right now, but they say they would consider making changes.



OLIVER WEIKEN, POOL/AP

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu chairs the weekly cabinet meeting in Jerusalem on Sunday.

Jewish West Bank population has surged

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — The population of Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank has surged during Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's years in office, growing at more than twice the pace of Israel's overall population, according to newly obtained official figures.

Settlement growth was strong beyond Israel's separation barrier, seen by many as the basis for a border between Israel and a future Palestinian state.

The figures reflect Netanyahu's continued support for settlement construction, even while repeatedly stating his commitment to the eventual establishment of an independent Palestinian state as part of a future peace agreement. They also could be a topic of discussion as Secretary of State John Kerry meets with Netanyahu and European officials this week.

While Israeli leaders of all political persuasions have built settlements for decades, the U.S. and western allies have dwindling patience for their construction.

From the beginning of 2009 until the beginning of 2014 — Netanyahu returned to office in March 2009 — the Jewish settler population in the West Bank grew 23 percent, to 355,993 people. In comparison, the overall population has grown 9.6 percent to just over 8 million in that time.

'This (U.S.) administration won't be around forever and I hope it is temporary.'

Moshe Yaalon
Israeli defense minister

took relatively little heat for the settlements because he was seen as a moderate.

In all, the settler population has more than doubled in the 21 years since Israel and the Palestinians have been engaged in an on-and-off peace process.

Abbas will seek end to occupation

The Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will push for a U.N. Security Council vote this week on a resolution setting a November 2016 deadline for ending the Israeli occupation, officials said Monday.

Such a move could set the stage for a Security Council clash over the Jordanian-backed resolution or over a second proposal by France, which seeks a two-year deadline for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on the terms of Palestinian statehood.

A Palestinian official said the Jordanian proposal has the support of only seven members of the 15-member council, meaning it would be defeated without triggering a U.S. veto. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss diplomacy with journalists.

The Palestinian push at the Security Council is largely symbolic. Abbas is under pressure after U.S.-led talks between Israel and the Palestinians collapsed last spring.

The Palestinians seek a state in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem, lands Israel captured in 1967. The U.N. General Assembly recognized such a state as an observer in 2012. Parliaments of several European countries have in recent weeks recommended to their governments to recognize a state.

Netanyahu said an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank could pave the way for a Hamas takeover there, as it did in Gaza after Israel's 2005 pullout.

"We will not let them do this, and I will say this to my colleagues in the diplomatic meetings I will hold in Rome," he said.

Meanwhile, Israel has indicted three members of a Jewish extremist group for setting fire to a bilingual school in Jerusalem where Jews and Arabs study together.

Monday's indictment accuses Yitzhak Gabai, of Jerusalem, and Shlomo and Nachman Twito, both of the ultra-orthodox West Bank settlement Beitar Ilit, of setting fire to the school late last month and writing racist slogans on its walls.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war, and prime ministers of all political affiliations have allowed and sometimes encouraged settlement of the territory.

The Palestinians claim the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip for their future state. They say all Israeli construction in the West Bank and east Jerusalem is illegal — a position with wide international support.

In a situation that challenges Israel's claims to being a democracy, the more than 2 million Palestinians in the West Bank cannot vote for the Israeli government that controls much of their lives, while Jewish settlers can.

Netanyahu repeatedly has drawn U.S. ire with controversial construction plans. Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon suggested last week that the government would have liked to do more if not for the U.S. pressure.

"We are very, very careful not to push the envelope too much," Yaalon said. "This (U.S.) administration won't be around forever and I hope it is temporary."

WORLD

6 British men charged with terrorist offenses

LONDON — London police say six men have been charged with terrorist and fraud offenses.

The men, between the ages of 24 and 43, were set to appear at Westminster Magistrates' Court on Monday.

The charges include preparation and assisting others in preparation of acts of terrorism, support of a banned organization, and conspiracy to possess false identity documents.

Police say five of the men are from London: Michael Coe, Simon Keeler, Anthony Small, Zagum Perviaz and Hamzah Safdar.

The sixth, Abdulraouf Eshati, has no fixed address.

Belgian police: 4 armed men enter apartment

GHENT, Belgium — Four armed men have entered an apartment in the western Belgian city of Ghent, and police have blocked off a wide perimeter around the area.

Police said Monday that a few hours after the men entered the apartment, it was still unclear whether they had taken any hostages.

At first sight, it didn't appear to be an act of terrorism, said federal police spokeswoman Annemie Serlippens. "There appears to be nothing political. And it does not seem to be going that way."

By midmorning, a big police operation had been set up in the working-class neighborhood to keep bystanders away from the scene.

China clears man 18 years after execution

BEIJING — A court in northern China on Monday cleared a man of the rape and murder of a woman in a public toilet 18 years after he was executed for the crime.

The Inner Mongolia Higher People's Court announced on its microblog that it had overturned the conviction of Huuigilt, who was 18 when he was sentenced to death and was executed for the 1996 crime. Like many ethnic Mongolians, Huuigilt used only one name.

The deputy head of the court, Zhao Jianping, offered his "sincere apologies" to Huuigilt's parents, China's official Xinhua News Agency reported. The parents received \$5,000 as an expression of the court's sympathy and were told they could claim an unspecified amount of compensation.

Karaoke bar fire kills 11 in northern China

BEIJING — A fire in a karaoke bar in northern China killed 11 people on Monday, local authorities said.

The fire happened soon after midnight and a total of 35 people were sent to the hospital, the Changyuan county government in Henan province said in an online statement.

The county government said that one of the fire was being investigated.

From The Associated Press

UN: Ukraine death toll up to 4,707

By JOHN HEILPRIN
The Associated Press

GENEVA — Fighting in eastern Ukraine has killed at least 4,707 people since the conflict began in mid-April, and more than a quarter of the recorded deaths have come since a much-ignored cease-fire, U.N. rights investigators said Monday.

A new report from the U.N. team in Ukraine says at least 1,357 of the fatalities have been recorded since the cease-fire began in early September, but the team noted that some of those deaths may have occurred before

then.

Some 10,322 people have been wounded in the conflict-affected areas of eastern Ukraine, where more than 5 million people are facing rising hardships, according to the report. The most vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, children and people in state institutional care, are being particularly affected by disruptions in social and medical services.

"The situation of many people, including those held against their will, in areas under the control of the armed groups may well be life-threatening," said the U.N.

high commissioner for human rights, Zeid Raad al-Husseini. "The government of Ukraine remains responsible for protecting the human rights of all Ukrainians, including the right to health, education and social security, in all its territory, including areas it does not fully control."

The latest findings from the Geneva office, based on reports from a 34-member U.N. monitoring mission in Ukraine during November and other figures through Dec. 12, say large-scale offensives have halted since the cease-fire, but skirmishes and

indiscriminate shelling of populated areas continue.

Previous U.N. reports have observed that the standoff between government troops and pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine is increasingly entrenched as law and order breaks down in Donetsk, the largest city under separatist control, and in rebel-controlled areas in the neighboring Luhansk region.

The report also notes lack of progress with several human rights investigations into alleged violations in Kiev, Kharkiv and Mariupol.



Rescuers search Monday for the victims of a landslide Friday that swept away a village in Jembrung, Central Java, Indonesia.

Number of dead in Indonesian village after mudslide rises to 56

By BAYU SASONGKO
The Associated Press

BANJARNEGARA, Indonesia — The death toll from a mudslide that flattened much of a village in central Indonesia rose to 56 on Monday before rain forced rescuers to halt their search for dozens of missing people, officials said.

Seventeen bodies, including those of four children, were recovered Monday, said Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, the spokesman for Indonesia's Disaster Mitigation Agency. Fifty-two people were still missing, three days after Friday's disaster.

More than 3,000 rescuers, in-

cluding soldiers, police and volunteers, were mobilized to dig through the mud and wreckage after the landslide buried more than 100 houses in Jembrung village in Central Java province's Banjarnegara district.

Many people in the remote farming village heard a deep rumbling sound just after dusk Friday and managed to flee to safer ground, while others were either at home or in the local mosque when mud, rocks and trees tumbled onto their village.

The search for the missing was halted Monday as rain prompted fears of another mudslide. Local army chief Lt. Col. Edy Rah-

matullah said it would resume Tuesday.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo, who visited the area Sunday, pledged to relocate hundreds of people left homeless by the disaster and promised government aid for the injured. Eleven villagers were hospitalized.

Seasonal rains and high tides cause frequent floods in Indonesia. Many of the country's 250 million people live in mountainous areas or fertile, flood-prone plains near rivers.

According to the national Disaster Mitigation Agency, about 41 million Indonesians live in regions prone to landslides.

S. Korean leader faces crisis over allegations

By HYUNG-JIN KIM
The Associated Press

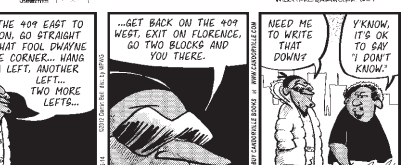
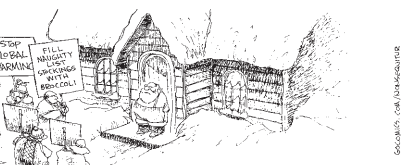
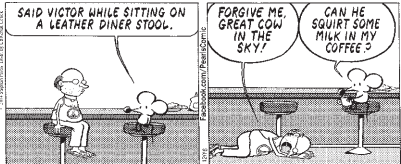
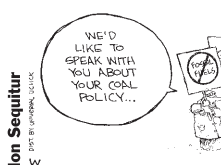
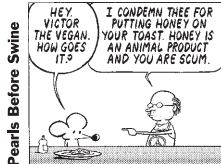
SEOUL, South Korea — South Korean President Park Geun-hye is facing a political crisis over allegations that a former chief adviser pulled strings behind the scenes on key state affairs and feuded with Park's younger brother for power.

The scandal poses a setback for Park, who already is dealing with criticism that her leadership is similar to the heavy-handed style of her late dictator father, former President Park Chung-hee. Critics say the current president's poor communication with the public and lack of transparency on the personnel decisions she makes are to blame for the scandal.

The scandal centers on former aide Chung Yoon Hoe, who, according to local media reports, allegedly met regularly with 10 of Park's associates at a Seoul restaurant to try to exert influence on her personnel management. Chung was Park's chief adviser when she was in the legislature, but has never worked at the presidential Blue House.

The reports are based on leaked documents from an office headed by a presidential aide, Cho Eung-cheon, who's reportedly close to Park's younger brother, Park Ji-man. The Blue House says the documents contain groundless rumors.

On Monday, prosecutors brought in Park Ji-man for questioning, the latest in a slew of high-profile figures who have been summoned since a local newspaper first reported the allegations late last month. Surrounded by a throng of journalists ahead of questioning at a Seoul prosecutors' office, Park, who is the head of an oxidized steel-making company, said he would tell investigators what he knows, but gave no further comments.



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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42						43	44				45	46	47
48						49				50			
51						52				53			

ACROSS

- 1 Touch
- 5 Capri, e.g.
- 9 Started
- 12 Long tale
- 13 October stone
- 14 Barcelona bear
- 15 Radio type
- 17 Siesta
- 18 Counterfeit
- 19 Fashion magazine
- 21 Worth
- 24 Frau's hubby
- 25 Hollywood dashers
- 26 Items often tossed at play
- 30 Sister
- 31 Discussions
- 32 Ultramodern
- 33 1960s head of France
- 35 On in years
- 36 Discard
- 37 Consecrate
- 38 Heard the alarm clock
- 40 Cold cuts purveyor
- 42 "Go, team!"
- 43 Crisp, sweetened biscuit
- 48 Hostel
- 49 Greek vowel
- 50 Press

DOWN

- 1 Fool
- 2 "Humbug!"
- 3 Actor Tognazzi
- 4 Home of the apostle Paul
- 5 Hawkeyes' home
- 6 Unwanted email
- 7 Privy, for short
- 8 Football teams
- 9 Fit for distances
- 10 Birthright barter
- 11 Narcs' evidence
- 16 Commonest word
- 20 Sphere
- 21 Sell
- 22 Chills and fever
- 23 Warm underwear
- 24 Cod relative
- 26 Pitcher's goof
- 27 Right angle
- 28 The Bee —
- 29 Turfs
- 31 Sets a radio dial
- 34 Diving bird
- 35 Keys or Silverstone
- 37 Diner order
- 38 Met melody
- 39 Potter's stick
- 40 They're often connected
- 41 Historic times
- 44 Weeding tool
- 45 Joan of —
- 46 Pond carp
- 47 Conclusion

Answer to Previous Puzzle

OLDS	APF	AONE
DIALECTS	UPON	
DEMOCRAT	TEND	
THE	EDUCES	
ALTHO	TERM	
BOAS	DEMANDS	
CAP	RENEW	OAF
DEMIGOD	DOLL	
EARN	PARTY	
MALALA	AIM	
ICON	DEMEANOR	
DELT	EMISSARY	
ISLE	DUD	KNEE

12-16

CRYPTOQUIP

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XANQYNWRHK OQXBABLNWR:

O X Q R N A Z A N A O Q Z C Z .

Yesterday's Cryptquip: THE MOTHER RAISED KIDS FOR SO MANY YEARS THAT SHE SAID IT FELT LIKE A MATERNITY ETERNITY.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: G equals W

SHIFTING GEARS



2015 Ford Mustang runs laps around American competitors

By MARK PHELAN
Detroit Free Press

The 2015 Ford Mustang redefines the affordable American sporty car.

New from the ground up, the Mustang runs laps around traditional competitors like the Chevrolet Camaro and Dodge Challenger. The first Mustang developed to be sold all over the world, it can also compete with luxury sport coupes that cost thousands of dollars more.

The Mustang's architecture, its basic structure, is all new. Barely a nut or bolt carried over from the 2014 model.

The difference is immediately apparent. A new independent suspension absorbs bumps better than ever before. This is the smoothest-riding Mustang ever, and the best handling, thanks to the suspension's improved road holding.

Prices for the 2015 Mustang start at \$23,600 with a 300-horsepower 3.7-liter V-6 and six-speed manual transmission. A six-speed automatic is a \$1,195 option with all the Mustang's engines.

A powerful and fuel-efficient, turbo-charged 2.3-liter four-cylinder engine is the new Mustang's main drivetrain innovation. It uses the suite of technologies Ford calls EcoBoost to produce 310 horsepower and 320 pound-feet of torque, more power than the BMW 435i's legendary 3.0-

liter six-cylinder turbo. Prices start at \$25,170.

The iconic 5.0-liter V-8 Mustang GT's power increases 20 horsepower to 435 horsepower for 2015. Prices start at \$32,100.

The Mustang is a great value, whether compared with the less technically advanced Camaro and Challenger or costlier luxury coupes like the \$46,000 six-cylinder 435i and \$71,825 V8 Audi RS5.

Mustang convertible prices start at \$29,100 for a V-6, \$34,670 for a 2.3-liter and \$41,600 for the GT.

I tested two well-equipped coupes, a \$43,560 GT and a \$37,425 EcoBoost 2.3-liter.

Both test cars had manual transmissions and features including Bluetooth audio and phone compatibility, ambient lighting and push-button start. Options included blind-spot and cross-traffic alerts, navigation, aluminum wheels, parking assist and adaptive cruise control, which uses radar and automatic braking to follow cars in traffic safely.

The interior boasts an attractive design and materials that look and feel fine, including aircraft-style aluminum toggle switches.

The controls are terrific, combining voice recognition with dials, buttons and switches to control climate and audio. Ford seems to have learned from complaints about its bulky MyFord touch layout: 2015 Mustang con-

trols are simple and easy to use. The optional Recaro seats could use a wider range of adjustments. The lid of the bin in the GT's center console had a troublesome latch that didn't always catch.

The exterior styling is attractive and evolutionary. With so many changes under the skin, Ford designers played it safe, creating an exterior that's immediately recognizable. Notable touches include front LED running lights and functional air extractors in the GT's hood to reduce lift and improve high-speed stability.

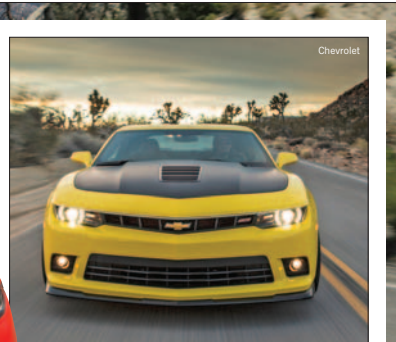
The Mustang's handling and ride are a joy, and both engines I tested provide plenty of power. Ford's 5.0-liter V-8 is one of the best, with a rumbling sound and a broad torque band that delivers strong acceleration in all gears.

The 2.3-liter EcoBoost revs fast, and accelerates eagerly thanks to its own broad torque band — 320 pound-feet at 2,500-4,500 rpm.

The 2.3-liter's handling benefits from the lighter engine and a more even front-to-rear weight distribution.

The engines' fuel economy is also impressive. The GT scored 15 mpg in the city, 25 on the highway and 19 in combined driving. The 2.3-liter turbo rates 22/31/26, both with regular gasoline.

That efficiency combines with the 2015 Mustang's features, value, looks and performance to set a new standard of excellence for affordable sporty cars.



The 2015 Ford Mustang, left, redefines the affordable sporty U.S. car. The pony car aims to take on the best luxury sport coupes the world has to offer, as well as traditional American muscle car competitors like the Chevrolet Camaro, top, and Dodge Challenger, below.



Ford Mustang GT Premium coupe

Price as tested: \$43,560 (excluding destination charge).

Reasons to buy: Performance; looks; ride; features.

Shortcomings: Rear leg room; no shift indicator; latch on center console.

EPA fuel economy rating: 15 mpg city/25 highway/19 combined.

Base price (excluding destination charges): \$36,100.

Engine: 5.0-liter 32-valve V-8.

Power: 435 horsepower at 6,500 rpm; 400 pound-feet of torque at 4,250 rpm.

Ford Mustang 2.3-liter EcoBoost Premium coupe

Price as tested: \$37,425 (excluding destination charge).

Reasons to buy: Performance; fuel economy; looks; ride; features.

Shortcomings: Rear leg room; no shift indicator; engine sound.

EPA fuel economy rating: 22 mpg city/31 highway/26 combined.

Base price (excluding destination charges): \$29,170.

EcoBoost engine: 2.3-liter turbocharged four-cylinder.

Power: 310 horsepower at 5,500 rpm; 320 pound-feet of torque at 2,500-4,500 rpm.

SOURCES: www.fueleconomy.gov; Autotrader.com; TNS

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Woman is accused of swapping sex for iPod

WA SEATTLE — A 27-year-old woman was charged with a felony for allegedly having sex with a 15-year-old boy in exchange for an Apple iPod.

The Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported that Marie Bracy met with the boy after he responded to a prostitution advertisement she posted on the website Backpage.com.

King County prosecutors say Bracy initially asked for \$160 but agreed to take the iPod because the boy didn't have any money. The boy's parents contacted the sheriff's office after they learned their son had hired a prostitute.

Bracy has been charged with communication with a minor for immoral purposes. She likely faces one to three months in jail if convicted.

Air show to return to Panhandle base in April

FL TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE — The Gulf Coast Salute Air Show is returning to Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida's Panhandle after a three-year absence.

Base officials said the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds will be a highlight of the show scheduled April 11-12.

The U.S. Army Golden Knights also will participate in the two-day event. Maj. Gregory Preisser said the next Gulf Coast Salute Air Show will be "a diverse show which should fascinate spectators of all ages."

The 2012, 2013 and 2014 shows were canceled, and Tyndall officials said in December 2012 that they had decided to stop planning the event after reviewing mission requirements and their spending of taxpayer dollars.

The Bay County event periodically has been canceled through the years for a variety of reasons.

Baby delivered in truck half-mile from hospital

NH LEBANON — A newborn from Newport is lucky her great-aunt was behind the wheel when her parents were on their way to the hospital.

April Premo said she was driving Justine and David Beachaine to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center early Sunday morning for the birth of their fourth child. They were about half a mile from the hospital when Justine Beachaine said they weren't going to make it in time.

Luckily, Premo is an emergency medical technician, and she was able to deliver the baby in her truck. She said it was the first time she had delivered a baby, but everything went well and baby Ava-Lynn is doing great.

Sea lion's head goes missing from pier

AK KETCHIKAN — A head that belonged to a massive male sea lion found dead has disappeared from a pier in Ketchikan.

The head had been dangling

THE CENSUS

15

The number of times a Nebraska man has been convicted of drunken driving. Lee Edward Collins, 74, of Lincoln, also received his 23rd conviction for driving without a license. A judge sentenced Collins on Thursday to four to five years in prison on account, to be served concurrently. Deputies pulled Collins over on Feb. 1 because he was stopped in traffic at a green light. Police said he smelled of alcohol. At the time, Collins' license was revoked on three separate offenses.



ELAINE THOMPSON/AP

Assault rifle wedding

The best man in a wedding party, the members of which declined to be identified, holds an AR-10 rifle he was handed Saturday while pre-wedding portraits were taken on the steps of the Washington state capitol before a nearby rally by gun rights advocates to protest an expanded background check law in Olympia, Wash. The wedding party was not part of the protest, but posed for pictures with the weapon after it was handed to them by gun activist Brandon Lyons.

from the pier into the water so it could be examined after it was cleaned by ocean critters, the Ketchikan Daily News reported.

Scientist Gary Freitag, of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, had examined the animal's carcass during the summer for clues to its cause of death. He had been planning to study the head for more hints after it was submerged for about six months, he said.

But within two weeks the head was missing, and Freitag said it looks like the rope was cut.

"I can't picture anybody taking it," Freitag said. "It probably was pretty ripe."

Police: Copper theft caused power outage

WA PORT ANGELES — The Clallam County Sheriff's Office said copper thieves damaged regulators and knocked out power in Elwha Valley.

Workers with the Clallam County Public Utility District were investigating the power outage early Saturday when they saw a hole cut in a fence. They inspected further and found that the copper grounding wires had been cut out and

stolen. When one of the grounding wires was cut, it made contact with a regulator, which caused it to short circuit. Officials said that damaged two other regulators and killed the power in Elwha Valley.

The PUD worker said the theft and damage would cost a minimum of \$120,000.

No one is injured in train-car accident

VT SOUTH ROYALTON — Vermont State Police said a car was torn apart but no one was injured when an Amtrak train struck the vehicle that had become stuck on the tracks in South Royalton.

Police said the incident happened at 7 p.m. Saturday. The car couldn't get across the track because the road was icy, and it was hit by a northbound train at 59 mph. Police said the force tore the front of the vehicle off and spun the car around.

Neither occupant of the vehicle was hurt, nor was any of the 71 Amtrak passengers.

The train, which was not damaged, continued after a brief delay.

Police remind drivers to stop at all ungated railroad crossings and listen and look in both directions before proceeding.

City officials consider limiting sledding

IA DUBUQUE — Those wanting to enjoy some sledding in Dubuque this winter might soon find their options limited.

The Dubuque City Council was to consider on Monday an ordinance restricting sledding on public property to Allison-Henderson Park and Bunker Hill Golf Course, the Dubuque Telegraph Herald reported.

The move is necessary to reduce liability risk to the city, City Attorney Barry Lindahl said. While municipalities are largely indemnified against lawsuits related to skateboarding and bicycling injuries, no such protections exist for sledding, skiing and snowboarding, Lindahl said.

If the ordinance is adopted, signs would be placed at the two parks warning visitors that they are sledding at their own risk. Sledding would be limited to day-

light hours, and inner tubes would be banned.

Gotcha: Free rides for college students

SC CHARLESTON — There may be no such thing as a free lunch, but there are free rides to be had on college campuses like those at Texas Tech, Auburn and Clemson.

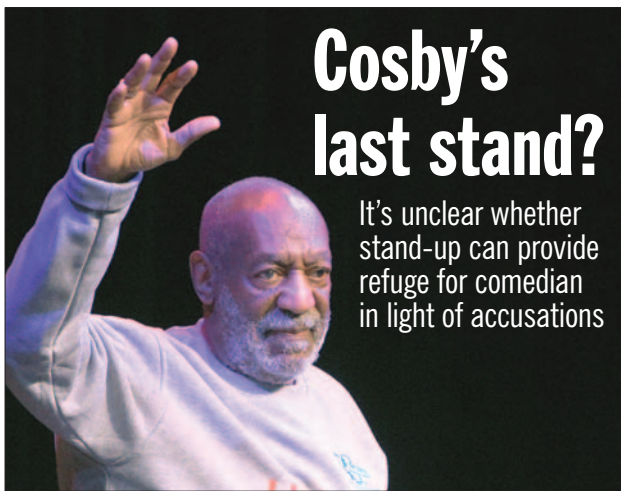
Gotcha Ride, a company operated by Sean Flood, of Charleston, S.C., has been providing free rides on campuses with the company's proprietary electric vehicles for five years.

Gotcha makes its money from ads on the vehicles, student drivers pull in as much as \$150 per night from tips, and universities like an additional transportation option on campus.

Next summer, the company plans to expand campus transportation options with Gotcha Bike. There will be GPS-equipped bikes that students can unlock with smartphones and use around campus for free. The chainless bikes will have puncture-proof tires and again have advertisements.

From wire reports

FACES



Cosby's last stand?

It's unclear whether stand-up can provide refuge for comedian in light of accusations

PHILAN M. ESENHACK/AP

Comedian Bill Cosby, shown performing at a Nov. 21 show in Melbourne, Fla., has numerous live appearances scheduled into 2015. However, other shows have been canceled amid accusations of sexual assault, and the future of Cosby's entertainment enterprises remains unclear.

By LYNN ELBER
The Associated Press

For five decades, Bill Cosby maintained a busy stand-up career even as his TV visibility rose and fell and new generations of comedians took center stage.

But the renewal of sexual assault claims that have soured TV and other comeback deals for Cosby are undercutting the live performances that represent his direct avenue to fans and a semblance of business as usual.

The 77-year-old comedian's ambitious tour schedule that has him crisscrossing the U.S. and into Canada this winter and spring has been whittled by cancellations and indefinite postponements of about 10 concerts in as many states.

"The venues are getting cold feet. Everyone is worried about protesters," said Gary Bongiovanni, editor of Pollstar, a concert industry trade publication. "If I was advising him, I would tell him to cancel everything and lie low for a while."

Jamie Masada, owner of the famed Laugh Factory clubs, suggested the same.

Until there is some resolution of the accusations against Cosby, ideally in court, Masada said, he's taking a risk with each performance.

"A stand-up concert is a free forum for audiences to scream whatever they want," he said.

But the wait could test Cosby, given two civil lawsuits filed against him this month. As the suits — one claiming molestation, another defamation — are pending, they will remain a red flag for media and other attention.

And although statutes of limitations make criminal charges appear unlikely, more than 15 women have emerged to air or revive accusations that include claims of drugging and sexual abuse.

Cosby has never been charged with a crime, and his lawyers have denied many of the allegations.

Amid the controversy, Cosby's last concert, on Nov. 21 in Melbourne, Fla., showed how powerful the mix of star power and fan ardor can be. Ignoring a sea of negative headlines and accusations outside, the adoring audience inside laughed heartily at Cosby's routine and gave him two standing ovations. Only a lone protester stood outside the concert.

Although some subsequent concerts got requests for refunds, clearly not all who came to admire Cosby as a family-friendly performer and an African-American TV groundbreaking (with "The Cosby Show" and "I Spy") are ready to reject him.

That's to be expected, said Allen P. Adamson,

Cosby briefly breaks silence

Bill Cosby broke his silence amid a flood of rape accusations in a very brief interview with The New York Post's Page Six.

"Let me say this. I only expect the black media to uphold the standards of excellence in journalism and when you do that you have to go in with a neutral mind," Cosby told the publication's Stacy Brown, who noted that he frequently writes for African-American publications.

Cosby, 77, has stayed silent in light of the more than two dozen women who have come forward to accuse him of having drugged and raped them. The alleged incidents go as far back as the 1960s.

In the interview, Cosby also addressed how his wife, Camille Cosby, has weathered the allegations and ongoing public scrutiny.

"Love and the strength of womanhood," he said. "Let me say it again, love and the strength of womanhood. And, you could reverse it, the strength of womanhood and love."

Cosby declined to address the rape and sexual assault allegations.

— The Associated Press

chairman, managing director of the New York office of brand consultant Landor Associates. While corporations beat a hasty, financially protective retreat at any hint of trouble involving a celebrity, people respond differently.

"Consumers are much slower to reject and very often make their own choices," Adamson said. "Individuals, especially die-hard fans, wait for the dust to settle. And even when it does, they might not mind."

On the business front, Cosby's scheduled Netflix concert special was canceled, and NBC scrapped development on a new sitcom with him.

For now, that leaves stand-up. The comedian's website lists 22 dates stretching into May, although three are among the canceled or postponed shows.

In light of the ongoing accusations, what can a celebrity in Cosby's position do to redeem his or her image and reputation?

"Unfortunately, not much, other than get out of limelight," Adamson said. "Usually time can heal some of this, and five years from now he might be able to relaunch himself."

'Exodus' reigns at weekend box office

The Associated Press

After three weeks of box office dominance, "The Hunger Games: Mockingjay — Part 1" ceded its reign to "Exodus: Gods and Kings." The biblical epic easily ruled the weekend with a \$24.5 million debut, according to box office tracker Rentrak's Sunday estimates, while "The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies" dominated international charts with a staggering \$117.6 million from 38 territories in advance of its North America release this week.

"The Hunger Games: Mockingjay — Part 1," down 40 percent from last weekend, came in second, earning \$13.2 million.

With an expensive \$140 million production budget, "Exodus: Gods and Kings" met expectations in its first weekend. But it failed to live up to the precedent set by some recent biblically-themed films, including "Noah," which opened to \$43.7 million in March.

"I think Hollywood is learning that putting epic, biblical stories on the big screen comes at a pretty heavy price. It's not easy to do this," Rentrak's senior media analyst Paul Dergarabedian said.

Also new in theaters, "Top Five," from writer, director and star Chris Rock, opened strongly. The comedy took in an estimated \$7.2 million from 979 locations to take the fourth-place spot behind "Penguins of Madagascar."

Bond producers say screenplay stolen

The producers of James Bond films acknowledged Sunday that an early version of the screenplay for the new movie "SPECTRE" was among the material stolen in the massive cyberattack on Sony Pictures Entertainment.

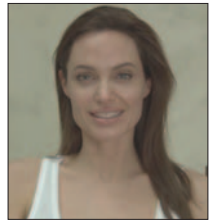
The producers are concerned that third parties who received the screenplay might seek to publish it — and warned the material is subject to copyright protection around the world.

The producers promised to "take all necessary steps to protect their rights against the persons who stole the screenplay, and against anyone who makes infringing uses of it or attempts to take commercial advantage of confidential property it knows to be stolen."

The revelation is just the latest among the spectacular leaks that are causing continuing embarrassment for Sony.

Highly sensitive material is being leaked almost daily, including an exchange between Oscar-winning producer Scott Rudin and Sony Pictures Entertainment co-chairman, Amy Pascal. Rudin called Angelina Jolie a "spoiled brat" and made racially offensive jokes about President Barack Obama's presumed taste in movies.

Rudin and Pascal have apologized.



Screengrab from YouTube.com

Angelina Jolie, who directed "Unbroken," looks noticeably spotty in a YouTube video post, expressing her regret at having to miss the movie's premiere in Los Angeles on Monday.

Chicken pox keeps Jolie from 'Unbroken' duties

Angelina Jolie is reluctantly calling in sick for "Unbroken" promotional duty.

Universal Pictures said Dec. 12 that Jolie was suffering from "a mild bout of chicken pox" that would keep her from some public appearances to support the film, which she directed, "Unbroken," about former Olympian Louis Zamperini, was set to premiere in Los Angeles on Monday.

The studio added that she's "in very good spirits" regardless. The actress, appearing pale and drawn, also explained her plight in a YouTube post (tinyurl.com/m32vuzs).

"I will be home itching and missing everyone," she says in the video. "I can't believe it, because this film means so much to me ... But such is life. There it is."

Other news

■ Author James Patterson announced Monday that he has given \$473,000 to 81 independent sellers around the country in the third and final round of his campaign to keep local stores in business. Since launching the program a year ago, he has given more than \$1 million to 178 sellers.

■ The TLC channel is launching its first late-night talk show next month, called "All About Sex." TLC says it will include rotating segments such as the week's "craziest" sex-related news, and will give viewers a chance to ask questions about their relationship challenges.

■ Comedian Tracy Morgan has won the latest round in his effort to sue Wal-Mart and others over a fatal crash in New Jersey. A federal judge refused to delay the lawsuit on Dec. 12. Kevin Roper, the driver of the Wal-Mart truck authorities say slammed into the back of Morgan's limo van in June, wanted the suit delayed until his criminal case was resolved. U.S. District Judge Michael Shipp said Roper failed to show he requires "emergent relief."

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Fuel prices down; air charges still up

By Tom Parsons
The Dallas Morning News

Fuel prices have fallen pretty low this year, but that dip hasn't been reflected in the price of airline tickets or in the cost of fuel surcharges to some international destinations.

In early December, the price of oil dropped to as low as \$66 per barrel and has been averaging around \$70 per barrel. That has many people wondering why airfares are still going up and why the fuel surcharge is still \$516 to many cities in Europe.

British Airways began its fuel surcharge in 2007, with an average cost of \$150 to many cities in Europe. The fee increased to \$330 for most of Europe when oil hit its peak of \$145 per barrel in July 2008.

Even though the price of oil has not spiked again, the cost of fuel has not continued to increase, the fuel surcharges have gradually increased to Europe.

The price of the fuel surcharge has little to do with the actual price of fuel.

Some cities in Europe have lower fuel surcharges, so tickets are often cheaper. For example, the fuel surcharge to Istanbul is \$266 from New York or Dallas and \$340 from Houston.

With the \$516 the airlines are charging for fuel surcharges to many cities in Europe, the airlines are making money when their planes are 90 percent full, just on the fuel fees alone. If they need to raise the fare by \$516, they should do it instead of charging a fee that is not based on costs.

There have been some markets where fuel surcharges didn't stick. Domestic fuel surcharges came and went, but airfares did rise by the same amount. We also saw fuel surcharges to South America and Central America, but they didn't last.

There have also been smaller fuel surcharges on flights to Asia

because the governments control how much can be charged. The fuel surcharge is \$161 from Dallas to Hong Kong and it's a 16,200-mile flight round trip. The fuel surcharge is \$516 from Dallas to Paris, if a much smaller distance of 9,860 miles round trip.

When it comes to fuel surcharges, Americans are getting charged more than travelers from other countries. American Airlines is charging \$516 for flights originating in the U.S. to Paris, but American charges \$366 for flights originating in Paris to the U.S. The fuel surcharge from Toronto or Vancouver to Paris or Amsterdam is \$366, but from Chicago, Dallas and New York it's \$516.

If you live in Canada and you fly on American Airlines, you will pay a lower fuel surcharge despite connecting through Chicago or New York. Now who is being taken for a ride?

There might be some good

news on the horizon. Aer Lingus has lowered the fuel surcharge on flights from New York, Boston and Chicago to Dublin from \$428 to between \$25 and \$35. The base fare is higher, which is how it should be, instead of hiding the higher cost in a fuel surcharge.

Out of Dallas, the fee is still \$428, which could be because Aer Lingus does not have direct flights and has to code-share.

We've also seen lower fuel surcharges on United to Dublin, which dropped to \$248 from \$428 out of the Northeast. United also dropped the fuel surcharge from Dallas to Moscow to \$204, and we've seen the fuel surcharge to Hong Kong drop to \$161 on most airlines out of Dallas.

If fuel prices stay low in the spring and the summer, or the U.S. government decides to take some action, we might see lower fares to Europe because there is plenty of room to drop fares out of the U.S.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Dec. 16)	\$1.2755
Dollar buys (Dec. 16)	€0.7840
British pound (Dec. 16)	\$1.61
Japanese yen (Dec. 16)	¥116.00
South Korean won (Dec. 16)	₩1,075.00

Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3769
British pound	\$1.5647/0.6391
Canada (dollar)	1.1395
China (Yuan)	6.1898
Denmark (Krone)	5.9857
Euro (Pound)	7.1515
Hong Kong (Dollar)	\$1.2427/0.8047
Hungary (Forint)	248.07
Israel (Shekel)	3.9366
Japan (Yen)	118.64
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2918
Norway (Krone)	7.4239
Philippines (Peso)	44.69
Poland (Zloty)	3.36
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7528
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3121
South Korea (Won)	1,102.15
Switzerland (Franc)	0.9665
Taiwan (Dollar)	32.97
Turkey (New Lira)	2.3368

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., South Korea (Won), Singapore (Dollar), Switzerland (Franc), Taiwan (Dollar), Turkey (New Lira)), the rates are based on the current market rate for the currency, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	3.75
Federal funds market rate	0.12
3-month bill	0.03
30-year bond	2.74

WEATHER OUTLOOK



Tuesday's US temperatures

City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr
Ablene, Tex	54	43	Cloudy	Chatanooga	55	38	Cloudy	Fort Wayne	47	29	Rain	Louisville	51	33	Cloudy	Pocatello	39	27	Cloudy
Akron, Ohio	51	32	Rain	Chicago	43	23	Rain	Cidy	42	23	Rain	Fresno	58	46	Cloudy	Portland, Maine	39	27	Cloudy
Albany, N.Y.	39	35	Rain	Cincinnati	49	33	Cloudy	Grand Rapids	46	28	Rain	Indianapolis	46	27	Rain	Portland, Ore.	46	39	Cloudy
Albuquerque	51	33	Cloudy	Cleveland	51	32	Rain	Green Bay	57	38	Cloudy	Jacksonville	59	35	Cloudy	Pueblo	41	19	Cloudy
Allentown, Pa.	45	35	Rain	Columbus, Ga.	66	39	Cloudy	Hartford	47	37	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	Reno	60	41	Cloudy
Anchorage	50	29	Snow	Columbus, S.C.	66	39	Cloudy	Houston	64	44	Cloudy	Madison	57	39	Cloudy	Richmond	56	40	Cloudy
Asheville	55	39	Cloudy	Columbia, S.C.	66	39	Cloudy	Indianapolis	46	27	Rain	Miami Beach	75	59	Cloudy	Rochester	45	39	Cloudy
Atlanta	59	39	Cloudy	Columbia, S.C.	66	39	Cloudy	Jacksonville	59	35	Cloudy	Milwaukee	40	22	Cloudy	Rockford	40	21	Cloudy
Atlantic City	52	40	Rain	Concord, N.H.	37	30	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	Minneapolis	31	20	Cloudy	Sacramento	58	48	Rain
Austin	60	45	Cloudy	Corpus Christi	66	57	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	Missoula	46	36	Cloudy	St. Louis	40	26	Cloudy
Baltimore	49	38	Rain	Dallas-Ft. Worth	53	40	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	Mobile	47	30	Cloudy	Syracuse	42	34	Cloudy
Baton Rouge	64	40	Cloudy	Dayton	48	31	Rain	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	Montgomery	64	36	Cloudy	Tampa	73	58	Cloudy
Bilings	29	18	Cloudy	Daytona Beach	73	53	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	Nashville	52	35	Cloudy	Toledo	51	30	Rain
Birmingham	57	36	Cloudy	Denver	38	18	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	St. Petersburg	72	61	Cloudy	Tokyo	46	34	Cloudy
Bismarck	22	5	Cloudy	Des Moines	30	19	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	St. Thomas	83	74	Rain	Tulsa	54	42	Cloudy
Boise	46	31	Cloudy	Detroit	51	32	Rain	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	Salt Lake City	43	32	Cloudy	Wichita	51	39	Cloudy
Boston	44	39	Cloudy	El Paso	61	41	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	San Jose	57	44	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	51	37	Cloudy
Bridgeport	45	36	Rain	El Paso	61	41	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	San Jose	57	44	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	51	37	Cloudy
Brownsville	75	65	Cloudy	El Paso	61	41	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	San Jose	57	44	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	51	37	Cloudy
Buffalo	46	38	Rain	El Paso	61	41	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	San Jose	57	44	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	51	37	Cloudy
Burlington, Vt.	33	26	Cloudy	El Paso	61	41	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	San Jose	57	44	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	51	37	Cloudy
Caribou, Maine	33	26	Cloudy	El Paso	61	41	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	San Jose	57	44	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	51	37	Cloudy
Casper, Wyo.	36	19	Cloudy	El Paso	61	41	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	San Jose	57	44	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	51	37	Cloudy
Charleston, S.C.	72	45	Cloudy	El Paso	61	41	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	San Jose	57	44	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	51	37	Cloudy
Charleston, W.Va.	53	39	Rain	El Paso	61	41	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	San Jose	57	44	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	51	37	Cloudy
Charlotte, N.C.	59	39	Cloudy	El Paso	61	41	Cloudy	Los Angeles	63	41	Cloudy	San Jose	57	44	Cloudy	Wichita Falls	51	37	Cloudy

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

National temperature extremes
Hi: Sun., 83, Naval Air Station, Kingsville, Texas
Lo: Sun., 3, Stanley, Idaho

Stripes

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OPINION

Brown, Garner families have civil remedies

By DAVID B. RIVKIN JR.
AND ANDREW GROSSMAN

The quest for justice for Michael Brown and Eric Garner did not end with the decisions of grand juries not to indict the police officers whose actions led to those men's deaths. Those frustrated by the grand juries' dispositions can take comfort in knowing that victims of police violence, as well as their families, can get their day in court.

The family of Garner, who died after being placed in an apparent chokehold by a New York police officer, has already announced plans to sue the officer and the city for \$75 million. Michael Brown's family has not yet said whether they intend to bring a lawsuit against former Ferguson, Mo., police officer Darren Wilson or the city, but their lawyer has indicated the possibility is being considered.

These suits may succeed where criminal charges failed. To protect against wrongful conviction, criminal charges must be proven "beyond a reasonable doubt," the highest standard in law. By contrast, civil plaintiffs need convince a jury only that their claims are supported by a "preponderance of the evidence" — a hair more than 50 percent.

Both families could bring claims for wrongful death, arguing that the officers failed to exercise appropriate care in the confrontations that resulted in the deaths of their family members. Such a claim by Garner's family would be particularly strong, given that the New York Police Department long ago banned chokeholds precisely to prevent choking-related deaths. As for Brown, the circumstances of his death are less clear at this time, but a trial would provide an opportunity for all the facts to come out. If the "hands-up, don't shoot" narrative is correct, the Brown family should be able to prevail.

And unlike a criminal trial, civil litigation

can reach beyond the boundaries of a particular case to bring about broader change. Federal law authorizes claims — which can be brought in state or federal court — for violations of constitutional rights by state officials. Such claims can target both individual officers and, where plaintiffs can show that their injuries are the result of an official policy or practice, the municipality itself.

The most obvious civil rights claim in each case would be for the use of excessive force; courts have ruled that the use of force must be "objectively reasonable" under the Fourth Amendment. Such claims are heavily fact-dependent, turning on — in the Supreme Court's formulation — "the severity of the crime at issue, whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of officers or others, and whether he is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight." The video of Garner's death appears to speak directly to that question. The suspected crime was minor, his threat nonexistent and his actions reflecting frustration with police harassment more than flight or resistance. Again, the evidence concerning Brown's death is less conclusive.

Both families could also bring claims challenging alleged racial profiling. Typically, such claims argue that a police stop was "based on the race of the suspect, a suspicion of criminality required by the Fourth Amendment and was based on race, in violation of the equal protection clause. Profiling claims can be difficult to prove, due to the light burden the law imposes on police officers to justify a brief stop. The officers involved in these cases have already offered reasons for stopping Brown and Garner — walking in the street and selling contraband cigarettes, respectively — that may be sufficient to defeat a profiling claim.

Still, such civil rights claims could be

a powerful way to force changes in policing in Ferguson and New York. Even if the cities themselves are not named as defendants, a finding of liability against an officer would put officials on notice that failure to prevent future abuses will have serious consequences.

Failure to appreciate the important remedies offered by civil law may lead some to draw the wrong lesson from the tragedies in Ferguson and Staten Island: that the protections for those accused of crimes are too strong. But safeguards such as grand juries provide, as the great Justice Joseph Story explained long ago, "security to the citizens against vindictive prosecutions, either by the government, or by political partisans, or by private enemies." Weakening that security not only further disadvantages communities that already feel they are unfairly targeted by police and prosecutors. If anything, reform should strengthen grand juries for all those accused of crimes to restore what once was a vital check on the power of prosecutors and a protection against the enormous burden of a wrongful indictment.

The mistake on both sides is to assume that victims of crime are entitled to punishment of those they believe are responsible. It is society that is entitled to punish the provably guilty. Criminal prosecution is therefore a poor test where evidence of guilt is ambiguous or equivocal — as is often the case involving confrontations with police.

What victims are entitled to is compensation for their injuries through civil litigation. That's why the grand juries' decisions are not the end of the story for determining police culpability for the deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner.

David B. Rivkin Jr. and Andrew Grossman specialize in constitutional litigation at the firm Baker Hostetler LLP. This column first appeared in The Washington Post.

US doesn't need torture to keep Americans safe

By ARTHUR H. HOUSE

When President Barack Obama took office, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., as the new chairwoman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, was clear that her panel would conduct the definitive study of torture by the CIA in its "war or terror." Other studies were not necessary. The committee would find out what really happened and tell the American people. That promise is now delivered.

The results are unsettling. The United States tortured people, and some died. No matter where you stand, it will be difficult to come to terms with that truth. The many of those involved with the "enhanced interrogations," the report is a betrayal of trust and a cause for great misunderstanding. They were told by President George W. Bush's legal adviser and the CIA that the techniques were legal and it was their duty to use them.

They will remember that others forget: the context of the times. They believed terrorists would inflict damage on our troops in Iraq or on the United States unless stopped. Time was critical. For them, revelation of the details — many refuse to call it torture — damages the CIA's ability to do difficult and essential jobs and unfairly tarnishes the agency's reputation. The CIA and the White House fear with justification that there will be reprisals against Americans.

For others, the report is difficult to digest because the findings reveal a betrayal of American idealism and rights and have gone to war to stop people who

torture. We believe in due process of law — the thought of Americans torturing others is repugnant.

American officers — in a period of war and fear following 9/11 — subjected captured suspects to stress positions, fatigue, temperature extremes and other techniques, including waterboarding. If used on us, we would know it was torture.

Feinstein courageously shone the light, despite charges of unpatriotic behavior and accusations of trying to castigate the CIA. The only honorable way out and ahead, is the one she designed: understanding the techniques, including the waterboarding, like all humans, make mistakes. This nation is exceptional for its ability to confront reality, admit errors and to avoid repeating them.

As Feinstein began her committee's work, Adam Dennis Blair became Obama's first director of national intelligence. Normally, if not in reality, the CIA reports to the director of National Intelligence. Blair proposed a common-sense solution for managing covert operations: They should be reviewed outside of the direct and far too exclusive route of CIA to president, which is averse to recognition of mistakes and prone to avoiding rigorous challenges.

Blair argued that an objective party should evaluate covert operations, challenge them and decide whether they appropriately serve our national security interests. The CIA, he said, cannot be proposer, designer, executor and judge of its own effectiveness.

Blair lost the battle, but he was right. We need a competent CIA and public sup-

port for what it does.

The report makes several things clear: First, the tenacious Feinstein deserves recognition as a profile in courage. She cares about national security and having an effective intelligence community. Her report will enable Americans to know the truth and move forward.

Second, Blair was on the right track. The United States needs an effective intelligence community with credible checks on its covert operations, which can be provided by the director of National Intelligence. After all, the office was recommended by the 9/11 Commission and established in 2005 to provide oversight of the U.S. intelligence community and to remove the policies and practices that have impeded information sharing.

Third, we and our representatives must be forced to confront a hard reality. We tortured people. The patriotic solution is to accept what happened and resolve that our national security, in Obama's words, will be consistent with American values.

We can defend our national security and strengthen our intelligence capabilities without the practices painfully identified in the Feinstein report. We must. Confession is good for the soul. We can then move forward with renewed faith in and public support for our invaluable intelligence community.

Arthur H. House is chairman of the Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority. He served as director of communications for the Office of Director of National Intelligence early in the Obama administration. This column first appeared in The Hartford (Conn.) Courant.

OPINION

Move smaller Iwo Jima sculpture to Calif.

By LAURA DIETZ

The Battle of Iwo Jima has long been known for playing a pivotal role in the conclusion of World War II.

The battle, on an island 650 miles south of mainland Japan, allowed U.S. forces to capture three airfields that served as integral staging areas for U.S. attacks on Okinawa and potentially the mainland. The 36-day battle took place from Feb. 19 until March 26, 1945, resulting in the deaths of 5,931 Marines and almost 900 Navy personnel, best immortalized for their part in the battle by the iconic photograph taken by The Associated Press' Joseph Rosenthal. That image showed five Marines and one Navy corpsman raising the second of two flags flown that day, Feb. 23, on top of Mount Suribachi.

The photograph became the most recognized photo of World War II, according to some scholars, and it electrified a war-weary America. It was used by an order of President Franklin Roosevelt to be the theme of the seventh — and most successful — U.S. Treasury War Bond Drive (May-June 1945). It was seen all over the nation, its popularity so great that newspapers offered reprints for sale. Even U.S. banks adopted it for their letterheads, promoting bond sales.

Marci Reavan, of the New York Historical Society, summed up its power: "It's an incredibly iconic image of bravery — immediately captured Americans' imaginations, their hopes for victory and fears at a difficult time."

The photo inspired sculptor Felix de Weldon, then serving in the Navy. DeWeldon created several sculpture versions of the photograph, about eight or nine according to his statements in 2003. A 10,000-pound version is available for purchase down to it not selling at the seller's minimum bid. February 2013 in New York. This smaller

version of the huge 80,000-pound bronze sculpture at Arlington National Cemetery that is formally known as the Marine Corps War Memorial is constructed of cast stone, as described by its restorers. The current owner, Rodney Hilton Brown, of New York, has the monument safely in storage in New York. I inspected it a year ago. Brown has been quoted as saying, "I want to find it a good home so we can pass the flag onto somebody else."

To do just that, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization was established, Iwo Jima Monument West (EIN: 46-7128553), to establish full tax deductibility for any individual, organization, foundation, etc. to this effort (aka "Operation Home of the Brave") to purchase this monument, transport it across the U.S. to the Marine base in Oceanside, Calif., Camp Pendleton, where the majority of Marines trained to go out in the Pacific theater and defeat our enemy at that time.

The vision statement I developed, as a devoted supporter of the Marine Corps and their families, conveys a beautiful sight. Imagine on a hillside this iconic symbol of American courage, that represents every Marine who has ever served or given his life. Around it a wall is planned covered in American flags, flying 24/7, lit at night in red, white and blue to catch the eye of Marines and passersby on Interstate 5 and to from San Diego. It will face Japan looking west out over the Pacific Ocean, wherein many of the deceased found their final resting place.

It demonstrates about all courage and sacrifice in one of the most famous battles in American history by Marines with Navy support. For the remaining survivors of that bloody battle it means recognition of their fallen comrades, and the 19,217 injured who came home. As Iwo Jima survivor Sgt. Maj. Mike Mervosh said with an impassioned voice: "How soon can you



Courtesy of Rodney Hilton Brown

A charitable organization has been established to purchase this smaller version of the bronze sculpture at Arlington National Cemetery and install it on Camp Pendleton, Calif.

get it to Camp Pendleton? You know, we Marines [from Iwo Jima] are dying, and I don't know how long my buddies and I can hold on [to see it at Pendleton]." Mervosh came close to death on the island, but another young Marine saved him. When he went to thank him, he learned that Marine had already died.

Hopefully, these heroes, Mervosh among them, won't have to wait much longer. That is up to the American public to open their hearts. Any donation, no matter how large or small, will be acknowledged at the

site, and on the website, with the donor's permission.

An architectural request for proposal is to be released this month for a design competition to create the site and its enhancements in accordance with the reverence it deserves, to inspire and educate forever all those who pass by.

Laura Dietz, of Newport Beach, Calif., chairs her Rotary Club's education grants program for "wounded warrior spouses." In 2012, California enacted legislation that she conceived to provide reduced hunting and fishing license fees for those who were "recovering servicemembers."

Ugly spending bill is what compromise looks like

By DOYLE MCMANUS

Los Angeles Times

The trillion-dollar spending bill that the House of Representatives passed last week had something for everyone to hate. But it was still a step, however awkward, toward making the United States governable again.

What was not to like? Plenty. Tea party conservatives hated the bill because it didn't hobble the two programs they hate most, President Barack Obama's health care law and his executive action on immigrants in the country illegally. Liberals hated it because it included a murky provision allowing federally insured banks to get back into the business of selling risky derivatives, one of the practices that produced the financial crash of 2008. Reformers on both sides hated it because it was stuffed with obscure policy changes that most members of Congress never had time to read, much less debate. This was an ugly bill, passed awkwardly, after much shouting and distress in both parties. Nobody on Capitol Hill was exchanging congratulations or high-fives.

And yet, it had its virtues.

It avoided another shutdown of the federal government, an outcome that would have produced not only chaos but also potential damage to the economy. More than that, it actually funded most of the government until next Sept. 30, giving the next Congress nine full months to write a new

The trouble with bipartisan compromises is that they are no fun. They are, by definition, disappointing to both sides.

budget without another crisis.

Those may sound like modest achievements, but that's more than Congress managed last year.

House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, bragged that he was passing the bill without resorting to even "a threat of a government shutdown."

Boehner's goal, an aide said, was to make sure next year's GOP majority can set its own agenda instead of lurching from one fiscal cliff to the next.

But to get there, Boehner had to take a pragmatic step toward the center, cutting a deal with Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., in his final week as majority leader in the Senate.

That meant Boehner had to withstand yet another rebellion from tea party conservatives in his own ranks. Once again, Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, tried to rally conservatives to block the deal, this time over immigration. Almost 30 percent of Boehner's Republicans voted against the bill. Boehner needed about an equal percentage of

Democrats to vote for it — and he needed the help of Obama and Vice President Joe Biden to get their votes.

What was in it for Obama and the Democrats? They didn't want a government shutdown either. After negotiating a backroom deal through Reid, they didn't want to risk being blamed if it fell apart. More important, the alternative looked worse from their standpoint: a two-month funding bill that would have allowed next year's Republican-led Congress to cut Obama's favorite programs more deeply and more quickly.

In other words, this bill is what compromise looks like. It had bipartisan support in the center, and bipartisan opposition on both left and right.

It's hard to remember that what we witnessed last week was once normal legislative behavior, especially in times of divided government. Instead of colliding, each side gave something up.

But the trouble with bipartisan compromises — one rarely advertised by advocates of bipartisanship like me — is that they are no fun. They are, by definition, disappointing to both sides.

That was certainly true of last week's bill. Conservatives howled in genuine rage; in their view, they won a national mandate in last month's congressional election. "Why is John Boehner cutting deals with the president?" demanded Sean Hannity, of Fox News. "Boehner has disrespected the people who voted for Republicans."

On the other side, Sen. Elizabeth War-

ren, D-Mass., issued a bare-knuckled warning to other Democrats that progressives would punish them if they failed to block the provision on derivatives, which had been drafted by lobbyists for Citibank. "A vote for this bill is a vote for taxpayer bailouts of Wall Street," Warren said.

That fissure between populists and Wall Street-friendly centrists is widening into open warfare among Democrats, who have managed to act almost in unison for the last six years. Instead of one party driven by civil war, we now have two — and just in time for presidential primaries.

For the moment, though, it appears that the two parties' establishments are in control. Just look at one more of the less attractive features of that spending bill: a clause that increased the amount of money a donor can give a national political party from \$32,400 to 10 times that amount, \$324,000.

How murky was that provision? By the end of the week, nobody on Capitol Hill had stepped forward to acknowledge putting it in the bill, but it had firm (if discreet) backing from leaders in both parties — because it would strengthen their institutional clout at the expense of grass-roots insurgents.

There could hardly be a clearer sign that American politics is slowly returning to normal — or a clearer reminder that bipartisanship, however welcome, isn't always pretty.

Doyle McManus is a Los Angeles Times columnist.

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SPORTS BRIEFS/COLLEGE FOOTBALL



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

The NFL Players Association filed a federal lawsuit Monday on behalf of Adrian Peterson, center, asking the court to dismiss an arbitration ruling that upheld the NFL's suspension of the Vikings star running back for disciplining his son with a switch.

Briefly

Union sues NFL over Peterson

The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — The NFL Players Association filed a federal lawsuit Monday for Adrian Peterson, asking the court to dismiss an arbitration ruling that upheld the NFL's suspension of the star running back.

The petition also requested a court order for Peterson's immediate reinstatement, arguing that Peterson has suffered far more than what's allowed by the collective bargaining agreement between the league and the players. Attorneys for the NFLPA asked to expedite the case in Minnesota, where the union has often gone to contest labor matters with the NFL.

Commissioner Roger Goodell suspended Peterson without pay for the last six games of this season and through at least April 15, the result of the child-abuse case that has kept the 2012 NFL MVP out of all but one game this year. Harold Henderson, the arbitrator appointed to hear Peterson's appeal, affirmed the entirety of Goodell's decision Friday.

The union argued that Henderson's decision was biased and overreaching, contrary to "fundamental principles of notice, fairness and consistency" and the essence of the CBA.

In the petition, the NFLPA said Henderson "ran roughshod over the required procedural protections of the CBA" and "summarily rubber-stamped the unlawful process and punishment of Mr. Peterson" with his ruling.

In his written decision last week, Henderson backed Goodell's assertion in determining punishment that Peterson lacked remorse for badly injuring his 4-year-old son with a wooden switch in an attempt to apply discipline.

The union accused Goodell of punishing Peterson to satiate "public calls for his resignation due to prior disciplinary failures."

Oilers fire coach after 7-19-5 start

EDMONTON, Alberta — Dal-

las Eakins was fired Monday as coach of the Edmonton Oilers, who have lost 15 of 16 games and are well on the way to missing the playoffs for the ninth consecutive season.

General manager Craig MacTavish will coach the team for the rest of the year, according to reports. MacTavish is scheduled to speak with the media Monday.

Edmonton has 19 points through 31 games, last in the Western Conference. The Oilers went 36-63-14 under Eakins in parts of two seasons, including 7-19-5 this year.

Headley, Yankees reach 4-year, \$52M contract

NEW YORK — Chase Headley is staying with the Yankees, agreeing to a \$52 million, four-year contract that signals New York is not counting on Alex Rodriguez to play third base regularly.

Coming off a season-long suspension for violations of baseball's drug agreement and labor contract, Rodriguez is owed \$61 million over the final three seasons of his \$275 million, 10-year deal. The agreement with Headley on Monday is a sign New York plans to shift A-Rod to designated hitter, relegate him to a backup role or perhaps even seek trade offers.

Harper, Nationals agree to \$75M, 2-year deal

WASHINGTON — Outfielder Bryce Harper and the Washington Nationals came to terms on a \$75 million, two-year contract, avoiding a grievance hearing.

Harper will receive salaries of \$2.5 million in 2015, and \$5 million in 2016 from the reigning NL East champions, according to a person familiar with the agreement who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Monday because the deal had not been announced.

Heisman Trophy

Contenders in place for 2015

By RALPH D. RUSSO

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Heisman Trophy winner Marcus Mariota will likely be taking his game to the NFL next season.

Runner-up Melvin Gordon has already said he will be skipping his last year of eligibility at Wisconsin to enter the NFL draft. Alabama receiver Amari Cooper, the other finalist who finished third in the Heisman voting, also is probably on his way to the NFL after the Crimson Tide are done chasing another national championship.

So who will be the leading candidates to win the Heisman Trophy in 2015? These days Heisman candidates are more likely to come from off the radar the way Johnny Manziel did in 2012, Cam Newton did in 2010 or Mark Ingram did in 2009.

That said here's a look at who could make a run at the big bronze statue next season (in no particular order).

■ TCU quarterback Trevone Boykin. The dual-threat junior could decide to enter the NFL draft, but this was his first full season as a starting quarterback. It's more likely that he will take one more year in Fort Worth, Texas, to refine his game. Boykin finished fourth in the Heisman voting after putting up 3,714 yards passing and 30 TD pass. He could be the favorite going into next season along with ...

■ Mississippi State quarterback Dak Prescott. A Teflon-like power runner, Prescott spent a few weeks as the Heisman front-runner this season before tailing off in November. He finished eighth Saturday. Like Boykin, he



JULIO CORTES/AP

Oregon quarterback Marcus Mariota speaks during a news conference after being awarded the Heisman Trophy on Saturday in New York. With the top two Heisman runners-up likely headed for the NFL, the race for the 2015 Heisman Trophy appears wide-open.

as another year of eligibility and is not likely to project as a high NFL pick. While the Bulldogs might not be able to replicate this season's 10-2 record, but Prescott could have another big year and be in the Heisman mix.

■ Ohio State quarterback, whoever that is. J.T. Barrett? Cardale Jones? Maybe Braxton Miller? Miller was one of the preseason favorites in 2014 before a shoulder injury cost him his season. Barrett stepped in and was on his way to at least being a finalist when he broke his ankle in the Michigan game. Jones stepped in against Wisconsin and was awesome. If Miller doesn't jump to the NFL he could transfer and play immediately. So maybe two of these three could be in New

York at this time next season.

■ Pittsburgh running back James Conner. The bruising sophomore has run for 1,675 yards and 24 touchdowns. Playing for a 6-6 team, he got overlooked this season. If he and the Panthers can take a step forward in 2015, Conner could be Pitt's first Heisman winner since Tony Dorsett.

■ A sophomore running back. Fabulous freshmen runners have been one of the top story lines of this season. Next season they could be even better and it wouldn't be surprising if a few of them make a run at the Heisman. The top candidates: Oregon's Royce Freeman; Florida State's Dalvin Cook; LSU's Leonard Fournette; Georgia's Nick Chubb and Oklahoma's Samaje Perine.

Florida St. turns to practice field

The Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Florida State coach Jimbo Fisher gave the No. 3 Seminoles a week away from football to decompress before the College Football Playoffs.

While the players used much of last week to take exams and focus on schoolwork, Fisher said it was a good break from the grind of the season that included six second-half comebacks.

"The pressures of winning and being a champion, sometimes you have to get away from it," Fisher said. "A fresh mind goes a long way."

Florida State (13-0) returned to the practice field Sunday for the first time since winning the ACC title Dec. 6 with a 37-35 victory over Georgia Tech. The Seminoles did welcome back tailback Carlos Williams, who missed the Georgia Tech game with a concussion.

Fisher held out defensive tackle Eddie Goldman and defensive back Tyler Hunter on Sunday, with both recovering from injuries.

"They'll be fine," Fisher said. "If we had to play a game next Saturday, they would be able to

play. I'm making sure they are healed fully before we get them on the field."

Florida State will spend the next week practicing in Tallahassee before flying to Los Angeles on Dec. 26 in preparation for their semifinal game against No. 2 Oregon (12-1) in the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1.

Fisher spent most of last week on the recruiting trail and attended the college football awards ceremony in Orlando on Thursday. But he has managed to take time to look at film of the Ducks and praised Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback Marcus Mariota.

"He's very well-deserving," Fisher said. "He had a tremendous year. Team had a tremendous year."

The Florida State-Oregon game will be a matchup of Heisman winners Mariota and Florida State's Jameis Winston, the 2013 winner.

Winston, however, is still awaiting the results of his two-day code of conduct hearing, which wrapped up on Dec. 3. A school official had previously stated that a decision could occur within 10

days from the hearing's conclusion but there is no definitive timetable on when the case will be resolved.

The potential ramifications for Winston range from a reprimand to expulsion from school. Winston is a redshirt sophomore and he is eligible to declare for the NFL draft after the conclusion of the season.

Winston's hearing, which was held approximately two years after a female student said Winston sexually assaulted her in December 2012, was held to determine whether Winston violated any or all of four sections of the code of conduct — two for sexual misconduct and two for endangerment.

John Clune, an attorney representing the woman at the closed hearing, did predict that the former Florida State Supreme Court justice presiding over the proceedings will announce his decision by the end of the year. Justice Major Harding has given both sides up to five days to submit a proposed order on what they think the outcome should be, Clune said.

NHL/COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Roundup

Reimer, Leafs top Kings for SO win

The Associated Press

TORONTO — James Reimer helped the Toronto Maple Leafs to a 4-3 shootout win over Los Angeles on Sunday, shutting out the Kings in the tiebreaker.

Joffrey Lupul scored the lone goal for Toronto in the shootout. Tyler Bozak was missed by Jonathan Quick, and Mike Santorelli missed.

Reimer turned away Marian Gaborik and Dustin Brown before Anze Kopitar missed for Los Angeles.

The Kings rallied from a 2-0 deficit and led 3-2 in the third before the Leafs forced the overtime.

Toronto has won five straight and is 9-1-1 since a 9-2 loss to visiting Nashville on Nov. 18. The Leafs also improved to 13-0 when scoring the first goal.

Justin Williams, Dwight King and Gaborik scored for the defending Stanley Cup champion Kings. Quick finished with 28 saves.

The second period has belonged to Toronto this season with a league-high 41 goals. But Los Angeles jumped on the Maple Leafs for two goals in four minutes, tying it at 2.

Williams trimmed Toronto's lead to 2-1 with his eighth goal at 16:02. He beat Jake Gardiner on a rush, helped somewhat by a lucky bounce, and swept the puck in past Reimer.

Rangers 2, Oilers 0: Henrik Lundqvist made 16 saves, leading New York to the road win.

Dan Girardi and Carl Hagelin scored for New York (14-10-4), which has won three straight and five of seven.

It was Lundqvist's fifth shut-out of the season. He also shut out 29 saves in Saturday night's 5-1 victory at Vancouver.

The Oilers (7-19-5) have lost four in a row and 15 of 16 overall. Ben Scrivens had 20 saves.

Blackhawks 2, Flames 1: Brandon Saad scored with 7:03 left in the third period, and host Chicago beat Calgary for their 12th victory in the last 14 games.

After mottoring past Calgary defenseman Mark Giordano, Saad took a centering pass from Jonathan Toews and lifted a shot past Jonas Hiller's glove.

Toews also set up Patrick Sharp's power-play goal as the struggling Blackhawks, dealing the Flames their fifth straight loss.

Jiri Hudler had his team-leading 12th goal for Calgary, which has scored just eight times during its slide.

Chicago's Antti Raanta made 23 saves while subbing for Corey Crawford, who is out with a foot injury. Hiller finished with 26 stops.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Tampa Bay	31	19	9	3	41	105	82
Detroit	31	17	7	7	41	92	79
Montreal	31	19	10	2	40	83	79
Toronto	30	18	9	3	39	103	85
Florida	28	12	8	8	32	64	74
Boston	30	15	13	2	32	76	78
Ottawa	29	12	12	5	29	76	81
Buffalo	30	12	16	2	26	56	91

Metropolitan Division

Pittsburgh	29	19	6	4	42	94	69
N.Y. Islanders	30	20	10	0	40	96	87
Washington	29	14	10	5	33	85	79
N.Y. Rangers	28	14	10	4	32	84	77
Philadelphia	29	11	13	5	27	79	87
New Jersey	31	11	15	5	27	72	91
Columbus	29	12	15	2	26	71	95
Carolina	29	8	18	3	19	61	83

Western Conference

Central Division							
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Chicago	31	21	9	1	43	95	61
St. Louis	30	20	8	2	42	89	70
Nashville	29	19	8	2	40	78	57
Winnipeg	31	15	10	6	36	73	74
Minnesota	28	16	11	1	33	81	70
Dallas	29	11	13	5	27	85	103
Colorado	30	10	13	7	27	78	98

Pacific Division

Anaheim	32	21	6	5	47	95	83
Vancouver	30	18	10	2	38	89	86
San Jose	32	17	11	4	38	90	82
Los Angeles	31	15	10	6	36	82	73
Calgary	32	17	13	2	36	95	85
Arizona	30	10	16	4	24	70	99
Edmonton	31	7	19	5	19	65	104

Note: Two points for a win, one point for an overtime loss.

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Sunday's games

Toronto 4, Los Angeles 3 (SO)
Chicago 4, Calgary 1

N.Y. Rangers 2, Edmonton 0

Monday's games

Ottawa at Buffalo
New Jersey at N.Y. Islanders

Tampa Bay at Pittsburgh

Tuesday's games

Tampa Bay at Philadelphia
Anaheim at Toronto

Carolina at Montreal

Columbus at Detroit

Washington at Florida

Los Angeles at St. Louis

Boston at Nashville

Buffalo at Winnipeg

Minnesota at Chicago

N.Y. Rangers at Calgary

Edmonton at Arizona

Wednesday's games

Ottawa at New Jersey
Boston at Minnesota

Dallas at Vancouver

Sunday

Rangers 2, Oilers 0

N.Y. Rangers 2, Oilers 0 1-0-2
Edmonton 0 0-0-0

First Period—N.Y. Rangers, Girardi 2 (Nash, Zuccarello), 16:04.

Third Period—N.Y. Rangers, Hagelin 6 (O'Moore), 19:28 (on).

Shots on Goal—N.Y. Rangers 8-7-22. Edmonton 5-6-16.

Power-play opportunities—N.Y. Rangers 0 of 1; Edmonton 0 of 2.

Goalies—N.Y. Rangers, Lundqvist 12-7-3 (16 shots-16 saves); Edmonton, Scrivens 5-11-3 (21-20).

A—16,839 (16,839), T—2:16

Blackhawks 2, Flames 1

Calgary 0 1-0-1
Chicago 2 0-1-0

Second Period—1, Calgary, Hudler 12 (Gaudreau, Brodie), 4:27, 2, Chicago, Sharp 4 (Toews, Kane), 8:43 (PP).

Third Period—3, Chicago, Saad 7 (Toews), 17:10-18-28.

Shots on Goal—Calgary 9-10-5-24. Chicago 11-10-28.

Power-play opportunities—Calgary 0 of 2; Chicago 1 of 2.

Goalies—Calgary, Hiller 9-9-4 (28 shots-26 saves); Chicago, Raanta 1-0-2 (24-23).

A—21,572 (19,717), T—2:17.

Maple Leafs 4, Kings 3 (SO)

Los Angeles 0 2-1-0-3
Toronto 4 0-2-1-0-4

Toronto won shootout 1-0 (Patrick Sharp, 11:30).

Second Period—2, Toronto, Franson 5 (Kadri, Santorelli), 19:30.

Goalies—Toronto, Hiller 1-0-3 (11-11-11-3-36, Toronto 8-6-16-1-31-3).

Power-play opportunities—Los Angeles 0 of 2; Toronto 1 of 3.

Goalies—Los Angeles, Quick 12-7-5 (31 shots-26 saves); Toronto, Reimer 6-3-0 (36-33).

A—19,219 (18,819), T—2:43.



TIMOTHY D. EASLEY/AP

Louisville's Terry Rozier, center, puts up a shot between the defensive pressure of UNC Wilmington's Freddie Jackson, left, and Nick Powell during the Cardinals' 68-57 victory Sunday.

Top 25 roundup

Cardinals survive Seahawks

The Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Terry Rozier and Montrell Harrell each scored 19 points and played big roles down the stretch in helping No. 4 Louisville survive UNC Wilmington 68-57 on Sunday night.

A game that the Cardinals seemed to be gaining control of with an 18-point lead early in the second half was soon cut to 52-50 as the Seahawks went on a 15-0 run over 4:07.

That's when Rozier asserted himself, scoring six of Louisville's next 10 points in a run that included Harrell's basket. UNCWC cooled off after that, missing 10 of its final 13 shots to lose the first meeting between the schools.

Harrell also grabbed 17 rebounds, and Wayne Blackshear scored 11 points for the Cardinals (9-0). They were despite shooting just 42 percent from the field and making only one of 13 three-point attempts.

Freddie Jackson scored 16 points and Jordan Talley had 13 for the stubborn Seahawks (3-3). They shot just 39 percent.

No. 7 Villanova 85, Temple 62: Josh Hart and Darrun Hilliard each scored 20 points to lead host Villanova past Temple.

The Wildcats are 10-0 for the second straight season and have won all three games against their Philadelphia rivals. They started 11-0 last season before losing to Syracuse. Up next for the Wildcats, another date with the Orange.

Hart and Hilliard became the first Wildcats to score 20 points this season. Both players made

six of seven shots from the field with three three-pointers.

Quenton DeCosey led the Owls (6-4) with 18 points.

No. 14 Iowa State 88, Southern 78: Georges Niang and Bryce Dejean-Jones each scored 18 points and Iowa State held off visiting Southern for its fifth straight victory.

Monte Morris had 15 points and five assists for Iowa State (8-1). The Cyclones led by 27 before a late Southern run.

Iowa State shook off a sluggish start with an 18-0 run late in the first half and early in the second. The Cyclones went ahead 53-35 on Naz Long's layup with 16:13 left, and hung on for their 26th straight nonconference home victory.

Tennessee 67, No. 15 Butler 55: Josh Richardson scored 18 of his 20 points after halftime, and host Tennessee rallied from a 12-point second-half deficit.

Butler (8-2) led 37-25 after Kellen Dunham's three-pointer in the opening minute of the second half, but Richardson scored the game's next eight points to spark a 12-0 run that tied the score. Tennessee took the lead for good on Armani Moore's basket with 6:15 left.

Kevin Punter added 18 points for Tennessee (4-3). Richardson and Punter combined to shoot 16 of 23, and Richardson also had a career-high six steals.

No. 17 Washington 81, Eastern Washington 77: Nigel Williams-Goss and Darin Johnson hit three-pointers in the final 1:16 to cap a big comeback and Washington beat Eastern Washington.

Robert Upshaw led Washing-

ton with a career-high 21 points and added nine rebounds and six blocks. Williams-Goss had 19 points and Andrew Andrews 18 for the Huskies (8-0).

Upshaw's tip-in with 1:42 to play gave the Huskies their first lead since mid-way through the first half, 71-70. Drew Brandon had an airball on a three-point attempt for Eastern Washington and Williams-Goss then hit his three-pointer from the left elbow to push the lead to four points. After a pair of free throws by Eastern Washington, Johnson hit another three-pointer with 53 seconds left.

No. 22 West Virginia 69, Marshall 66: Juwan Stanton scored 15 points, including two free throws with seven seconds left.

West Virginia (9-1) is off to its best start since going 11-0 in the 2009-10 season, when it reached the Final Four.

Jonathan Holton and Jevon Carter add 14 points apiece for the host Mountaineers and Gary Browne scored 10.

Justin Edmonds led Marshall (3-6) with 18 points. Austin Loop scored 13 and Ryan Taylor had 11.

No. 24 St. John's 74, Fordham 53: Rysheed Jordan came off the bench and tied a career high by scoring 24 points.

D'Angelo Harrison added 22 for St. John's, which improved to 8-1, visiting after winning its fourth straight.

The game was St. John's 47th appearance in the Holiday Festival, and the Red Storm improved to 71-38 all-time in the traditional New York City college basketball doubleheader held at Madison Square Garden.

A black and white photograph of Kobe Bryant, a professional basketball player, waving to the crowd. He is wearing a Los Angeles Lakers jersey with the number 24. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred crowd of spectators.

ANN HEISENFELT/AF

Kobe passes MJ in scoring

Utah	24	18	16	26-84
Washington	22	15	30	26-93
Three-Point Goals—Utah 5-17 (Burks 4-4, Exum 1-1, Burke 1-3, Evans 0-1, Inles 0-1, Hood 0-2, Booker 0-2, Hayward 1-3), Washington 4-13 (Beal 2-5, Pierce 1-3, Butler 1-3, Wall 0-2). Rebounds—Utah 5 (Kanter 11), Washington 50 (Gortat, Beal 7). Assists—Utah, 13. (Hayward 10)				

NBA/NFL

Around the NBA

Malone out in Sacramento

Struggles without Cousins spell end for Kings' coach

BY ANTONIO GONZALEZ
The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — It looked as if everything was coming together for the Sacramento Kings.

DeMarcus Cousins was keeping his cool while putting up All-Star numbers. Second-year coach Michael Malone had his team playing defense, and the Kings were consistently beating Western Conference contenders.

One illness ended all that. Cousins came down with viral meningitis more than two weeks ago, and neither the franchise center nor the Kings (11-13) have recovered yet. Sacramento has gone just 2-7 without Cousins — who remains out indefinitely — heading into Tuesday night's home game against Oklahoma City, which had its own health-related problems while NBA MVP Kevin Durant and co-star Russell Westbrook were out with injuries.

Malone was fired late Sunday night and assistant Tyrone Corbin was promoted to interim coach. A person with knowledge of the moves confirmed the change on condition of anonymity because the team had not announced it yet.

While season-long goals can't be accomplished before Christmas, the Kings and Thunder know they can sure be wrecked.

How teams handle such critical times can go a long way in determining their season. That was basically the message Malone gave to his players last week.

"I told our guys, 'We have no idea when DeMarcus is coming back. So we need everybody to man up and play to the best of your ability,'" Malone said before his dismissal was announced.

Houston has been able to manage injuries better than any team in the league.

Dwight Howard missed 11 straight games with a strained right knee before returning Sat-



RICH PEDRONCELLI/AP

Head coach Michael Malone was fired by the Sacramento Kings on Sunday after the team struggled to a 2-7 record without center DeMarcus Cousins, who has missed more than two weeks of action after contracting viral meningitis. Assistant coach Tyrone Corbin has been promoted to interim coach. There is still no timetable for Cousins' return.

urday against Denver. The Rockets (18-5) went 8-3 without the All-Star center.

Here's what else to look for around the NBA this week:

Winning Warriors: The Golden State Warriors have won a franchise-record 16 straight games, which is almost halfway to the NBA record of 33 in row set by the Los Angeles Lakers during the 1971-72 season. The Warriors play at Memphis on Tuesday and host Oklahoma City on Thursday.

Biggest losers: Philadelphia gained national attention by starting 0-17 and coming within one loss of tying the record for worst start to a season. But the Sixers have hardly been the only big losers this season. Detroit's 13-game losing streak ended with a win at Phoenix on Friday. Charlotte had

a 10-game losing streak. Utah had a nine-game skid. The New York Knicks have put together losing streaks of 10 and seven in a row already.

Big three: San Antonio beat the Knicks 109-95 on Wednesday without Tim Duncan, Tony Parker and Manu Ginobili. The Spurs are just 5-10 in games the Big Three sit out since they became teammates in 2002.

Stat line of the week: Blake Griffin scored 45 points, including a three-pointer as time expired, to lift the Los Angeles Clippers to a 121-120 overtime win against Phoenix last Monday night. He joined Dwyane Wade and Gilbert Arenas as the only players to score at least 45 points and hit a buzzer-beater in the same game in the last 10 seasons.



ELAINE THOMPSON/AP

San Francisco quarterback Colin Kaepernick gets up after he was sacked during the 49ers' 17-7 loss to the Seahawks in Seattle.

Seahawks knock 49ers from playoff contention

BY TIM BOOTH
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — Pete Carroll and Jim Harbaugh shook hands and went their separate ways, one headed toward the postseason and a possible No. 1 seed, the other dealing with the disappointment of missing the playoffs for the first time in his coaching career.

Carroll and the Seahawks knocked San Francisco out of playoff contention with a 17-7 win on Sunday, ending the 49ers' run of reaching the NFC championship game for three straight seasons.

Seattle (10-4) won for the fifth time in six games against the 49ers. Combined with Buffalo's win over Green Bay earlier Sunday, the Seahawks moved into a position where a No. 1 seed in the NFC playoffs is now possible.

"The Niners came out really going for it. They did a great job planning," Carroll said. "They did a lot of new stuff and some things that challenged us on defense today, early in the game. Fortunately, our guys settled down and figured some stuff out and did a really good job of adjusting, and we just really didn't give up anything in the second half."

Marshawn Lynch rushed for 91 yards and a touchdown and Russell Wilson added a 10-yard TD pass to Paul Richardson in the fourth quarter as Seattle rallied

from a 7-3 halftime deficit.

The 49ers (7-7) played better than they did during their 19-13 loss to Seattle on Thanksgiving night, but the result was the same.

"It's definitely tough. Especially for me, I'm very competitive. I always feel like I'm supposed to win," 49ers wide receiver Anquan Boldin said. "I can't tell you the last time I didn't make the playoffs."

In a season filled with key injuries, the 49ers lost two more players late in the first half and another in the third quarter. Running back Frank Gore, who scored on a 10-yard run in the second quarter, left with a concussion. Middle linebacker Chris Borland, the NFC defensive rookie of the month in November, hurt his ankle on the final play of the first half. He attempted to return, but was mostly a spectator and replaced by Nick Moody.

Gore's backup, Carlos Hyde, was bent backward and appeared to injure his right leg late in the third quarter. And that was on top of San Francisco being without starting offensive linemen Marcus Martin and Anthony Davis, and cornerback Chris Culliver.

"They played as tough as you could want them, and they were right there the whole time," Carroll said. "They had a lot of guys stepping in. A lot of credit goes to those guys."



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NFL

Scoreboard

FROM PAGE 28

Jets 16, Titans 11				
N.Y. Jets	0	3	7	6-16
Tennessee	3	2	6	0-11

First Quarter
 Ten—FG Succop 40, 3:16.

Second Quarter
 Ten—Team safety, 12:09.

Third Quarter
 Ten—FG Succop 33, 0:03.

Fourth Quarter
 Ten—Conner 9 pass from Smith (Folk kick), 4:24.

Penalties
 Ten—FG Succop 51, 2:02.

First Downs
 Ten—FG Succop 51, 2:02.

Second Downs
 Ten—FG Succop 51, 2:02.

Third Downs
 Ten—FG Succop 51, 2:02.

Fourth Downs
 Ten—FG Succop 51, 2:02.

Time of Possession
 Ten—FG Succop 51, 2:02.

Individual Statistics
 Rushing—N.Y. Jets, C. Johnson 10-55, Ivory 12-25, Smith 4-16, Harvin 1-10, B. Powell 1-1, Conner 1-0.

Passing
 Ten—Conner 1-0, Whitehurst 1-0, B. Powell 1-0, Conner 1-0.

Kickoff Returns
 Ten—Conner 1-0, Whitehurst 1-0.

Interceptions Ret.
 Ten—Conner 1-0, Whitehurst 1-0.

Comp.-Att.-Int.
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Sacked-Yards Lost
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Bryant leads Cowboys past Eagles

By ROB MAADDI

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Dez Bryant backed up his bravado in a big way.

Bryant had a career-best three touchdown receptions, and the Dallas Cowboys rallied to beat the Philadelphia Eagles 38-27 after wasting a 21-0 lead.

DeMarco Murray had a pair of TD runs to help the Cowboys (10-4) move ahead of the Eagles (9-5) into first place in the NFC East. The Eagles dominated the Cowboys in a 33-10 road win on Thanksgiving, but Dallas seized control of the division with two weeks left.

"We believed in one another, and I think that's the key to victory," Bryant said. "Believing in one another and just trying to come out and execute the plays the best way that we possibly can, and we did that."

The NFC-leading Arizona Cardinals (11-3) clinched a playoff berth because the game didn't end in a tie.

The Cowboys took a 21-0 lead



MATT ROUKE/AP

Dallas Cowboys wide receiver Dez Bryant reacts after scoring a touchdown during Sunday's game against the Eagles in Philadelphia.

early in the second quarter before Philadelphia rallied behind Mark Sanchez.

Chris Polk had TD runs of 1 and

5 yards, and Darren Sproles ran in from the 1 to give the Eagles a 24-21 lead late in third quarter. But Tony Romo and the Cowboys

answered quickly with two touchdowns in a 2:51 span.

Murray scored on a 2-yard run to cap a 78-yard drive. After J.J. Wilcox intercepted Sanchez's pass, the Cowboys started the fourth quarter at the Eagles 42. Romo then hit Bryant in stride for a 25-yard scoring pass.

"Having a guy like Dez makes it easy to throw to spots that he can go get it," Romo said. "Just lucky to have him."

Bryant couldn't wait for this game after being held to 73 yards on four catches in the first meeting. After that game, he called Philadelphia's secondary "cheap," and he had a heated exchange with Eagles safety Malcolm Jenkins before Sunday night's game. Bryant came back twice after Jenkins walked away and it wasn't known why they argued.

"Just great competitors going at it, that's all," Bryant said. Bryant finished with six receptions for 114 yards. He beat cornerback Bradley Fletcher on each of the TDs.

"I just had a terrible game," Fletcher said.

Bills 21, Packers 13

Green Bay	3	7	0	3-13
Buffalo	7	3	6	5-21

First Quarter
 GB—FG Crosby 45, 4:27.

Second Quarter
 GB—Lacy 1 run (Crosby kick), 14:14.

Third Quarter
 GB—FG Carpenter 51, 9:21.

Fourth Quarter
 GB—FG Carpenter 35, 4:18.

Penalties
 GB—FG Crosby 45, 4:27.

First Downs
 GB—FG Crosby 45, 4:27.

Second Downs
 GB—FG Crosby 45, 4:27.

Third Downs
 GB—FG Crosby 45, 4:27.

Fourth Downs
 GB—FG Crosby 45, 4:27.

Time of Possession
 GB—FG Crosby 45, 4:27.

Individual Statistics
 Rushing—Green Bay, Lacy 15-97, A. Rodgers 3-27, Starks 1-10, Cobb 3-15.

Passing
 GB—Lacy 15-97, A. Rodgers 3-27, Starks 1-10, Cobb 3-15.

Kickoff Returns
 GB—Lacy 15-97, A. Rodgers 3-27, Starks 1-10, Cobb 3-15.

Interceptions Ret.
 GB—Lacy 15-97, A. Rodgers 3-27, Starks 1-10, Cobb 3-15.

Comp.-Att.-Int.
 GB—Lacy 15-97, A. Rodgers 3-27, Starks 1-10, Cobb 3-15.

Sacked-Yards Lost
 GB—Lacy 15-97, A. Rodgers 3-27, Starks 1-10, Cobb 3-15.

Fumbles-Lost
 GB—Lacy 15-97, A. Rodgers 3-27, Starks 1-10, Cobb 3-15.

Penalties
 GB—Lacy 15-97, A. Rodgers 3-27, Starks 1-10, Cobb 3-15.

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Best: Pats, Broncos, Colts all wrap up division titles

FROM BACK PAGE

Not much else is very clear in the NFC postseason picture, although Arizona (11-3) clinched a berth when Philadelphia lost 38-27 to NFC East leader Dallas on Sunday night, and San Francisco (7-7) was eliminated from contention with its 17-0 loss to reigning Super Bowl champion Seattle. That ends the 49ers' streak of three straight conference title game appearances.

The more clarity — and consistency — in the AFC,

New England (East, Denver (West) and Indianapolis (South) all sealed division title repeats with victories, and defending North champion Cincinnati is in first place, too.

"At training camp we made some goals," receiver Reggie Wayne said after the Colts beat the Texans 17-10. "Taking care of the division was our first goal, so we were able to check that one off."

In case you missed it, here are the other top topics after the NFL season's 15th Sunday:

Johnny Rookie: Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Manziel received a rude welcome to the NFL in his first start, passing for only 80 yards, throwing a pair of interceptions, getting sacked three times — and being taunted with his trademark finger-rubbing "money" gesture — in Cleveland's 30-0 loss to Cincinnati. No one was a harsher critic of the rookie than Manziel himself, who said this about his second interception: "Whether you're playing in a Pop Warner league or if you're 6 years old, playing in the driveway, you can't throw that ball."

Fight! For the second week in a row, a brawl broke out during an NFL game. This time, it was Titans defensive tackle Jurrell Casey swinging at the head of Jets quarterback Geno Smith that sparked a melee involving plenty of other players on a pair of teams

that each came into the game at 2-11. Last week, the Panthers and Saints fought.

Redskins follies: It's always something with the Redskins, who dropped to 3-11 by losing their sixth straight, 24-13 at the Giants, in a game that hinged on a wild sequence at the end of the first half. With Washington ahead 10-7 and — after wasting time between plays, then making an odd choice to accept a penalty — Robert Griffin III appeared to score on an 8-yard touchdown run by diving into the end zone on the half's last play. But it was ruled he juggled the ball. "It's a touchdown in every game that I've ever seen," RG3 said, "but they decided that it wasn't today." The call prompted coach Jay Gruden and some players to charge at officials to complain, receiver Santana Moss was ejected; two penalties were enforced on the second-half kickoff; the Giants recovered an onside kick that led to a field goal. Whew.



JULIO CORTES/AP

Washington Redskins quarterback Robert Griffin III walks to the sidelines during Sunday's 24-13 loss to the New York Giants.

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NFL ROUNDUP



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CLEVELAND — Flames shot skyward from two giant Browns helmets as rookie quarterback Johnny Manziel ran onto the field for his first start.

That's as close as he came to providing a spark on Sunday. Manziel looked overmatched and overwhelmed for much of the game as Cincinnati wrecked his anticipated debut as a starter.

Playing in front of NBA megastar and friend, LeBron James, and a Cleveland crowd loaded with No. 2 jerseys, Manziel failed miserably. He never got to flash his "money" sign and the 22-year-old did little to convince the Browns that he is their quarterback of the future.

"Looked like a rookie, played like a rookie," Browns coach Mike Pettine said. "He made some obvious mistakes that typically a veteran quarterback won't make."

Manziel completed 10 of 18 passes for 80 yards with two interceptions — a third was nullified by a penalty. He finished with a 27.3 rating, hardly what the Browns (7-7) were looking for when Pettine benched veteran Brian Hoyer and put Cleveland's playoff hopes on Manziel.

The Browns lost their third straight game, and any chance of winning the AFC North.

It wasn't all Manziel's fault, but he didn't play well enough to inspire any of his teammates either. "I felt like it was a fail on my part for the position, and it's tough," said Manziel, Cleveland's 21st quarterback since 1999. "It's going to take time. It's a process for sure. Yeah, I'm a rookie, but that's out the window. I needed to play better."

The Bengals (9-4-1) were determined to not let Manziel get the best of them. They chased, harassed and even taunted Manziel, with several Cincinnati defenders mimicking his signature "money-rub" gesture — just as Pettine predicted they would. "We didn't want to let him be Johnny Football versus us," defensive end Carlos Dunlap said.



16 14

DETROIT — Matt Prater's 33-yard field goal with 3:38 remaining lifted Detroit into the tie for first place in the NFC North.

The Lions (10-4) are now even with the division with Green Bay, but Detroit didn't have an easy time, spotting the Vikings (6-8) a 14-0 lead before a pair of second-quarter interceptions helped the Lions start their rally.

Even at the end, Detroit had to sweat out a 68-yard field goal attempt by Minnesota's Blair Walsh on the game's final play. The kick was short.



PATRICK SEMANSKY/AP

Ravens receiver Marlon Brown spins around Jaguars safety Josh Evans after a catch during the second half on Sunday in Baltimore.



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ATLANTA (9-4-1) — Ben Roethlisberger threw for 360 yards and William Gay returned an interception for a touchdown as the Steelers remained a half-game behind Cincinnati in the AFC North.

Pittsburgh led 13-0 after Gay picked off Matt Ryan on the first play of the second quarter, returning it 52 yards. The Steelers extended the lead to 27-13 with Le'Veon Bell's 1-yard run early in the fourth period.

The Falcons (5-9) slipped out of first place in the abysmal NFC South and ensured themselves a second straight losing season. But Atlanta can still make the playoffs by winning its final two games against division rivals New Orleans and Carolina.

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Aaron Rodgers, Jordy Nelson and the Green Bay Packers may have watched home-field advantage in the playoffs slip through their fingers.

Rodgers was intercepted twice by third-string safety Bacarri Rambo, and Nelson dropped a wide-open pass late in the third quarter in a sloppy, inefficient 21-13 loss to the Buffalo Bills on Sunday.

"It wasn't my best day by any stretch of the imagination," Rodgers said. "I gotta play better for us to win. I expect more of myself."

Rodgers was 17-for-42 for 185 yards, and didn't get much help from his receivers, either. Trailing 16-10 and facing second-and-6 at his own 6, Rodgers found Nelson in stride down the right sideline, but the normally sure-handed receiver dropped the ball with nothing but field in front of him.

"We had all sorts of chances and just didn't make them for whatever reason," Nelson said. "My drop could've won the game for us, so I've gotta make those no matter how easy or hard they are."

The Packers (10-4) had a five-game win streak snapped and squandered an opportunity to get closer to their sixth consecutive playoff berth.

The Bills (8-6) stayed in the thick of a jumbled AFC playoff hunt. Marcus Thigpen scored on a 75-yard punt return, while Dan Carpenter hit all four field-goal attempts, including three in the second half.

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Derek Anderson threw for 277 yards and a touchdown, Graham Gano kicked four field goals and the Panthers improved their chances in the NFC South playoff race.

The win put the Panthers percentage points in first place ahead of New Orleans in the division. The Saints (5-8) play at Chicago on Monday night.

Anderson was 25-for-40 and improved to 2-0 as a starter in place of Cam Newton, sidelined while recovering from a car accident.

Greg Olsen tied a career high with 10 catches for 110 yards, and rookie Kelvin Benjamin had eight grabs for 104 yards.

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.

— Eli Manning threw three touchdown passes to rookie Odell Beckham Jr. and the Giants took advantage of an overturned touchdown at the end of the half. Manning and Beckham combined 12 times for 143 yards, with touchdown passes covering 10, 35 and 6 yards.

The Redskins (3-11) blew a touchdown and command of the game on a fumble by Robert Griffin III as time expired at the end of the first half. Griffin scrambled for an apparent 8-yard touchdown for a 17-7 lead. A video review determined that Griffin lost control of the ball diving over the pylon and the play was ruled a touchback.



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KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Alex Smith threw for 297 yards and two scores, while Kansas City shut down Derek Carr.

Knile Davis had touchdowns running and receiving, and De'Anthony Thomas returned a punt 81 yards for another score as the Chiefs (8-6) got even for a loss to Oakland (2-12) last month.

The Chiefs led 10-6 early in the third quarter before scoring three TDs in 4 minutes, 42 seconds. The last was a 70-yard throw to Davis, who took over the majority of running back duties after Jamaal Charles took a shot to the head.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Chris Ivory scored on a 1-yard touchdown run with 3:09 left in a game marked by a brawl between teams fighting for pride, with the loser hoping for better draft position.

The Jets (3-11) got their first road win this season in the first NFL game to end 16-11. They also snapped a three-game skid.

Geno Smith threw for 17 yards and a TD. He also was apparently hit by Titans defensive tackle Jurrell Casey, starting a brawl in the third quarter Casey was flagged, but not ejected.

NFL



LENNY IONELZ/AP

The Chargers' Melvin Ingram hits Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning before he can get the pass away on Sunday.

Division title helps soothe ill Manning

By BERNIE WILSON
The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Peyton Manning was sick and sore.

He took four bags of intravenous fluid between Saturday night and Sunday morning, and then hurt his right thigh in the second quarter, requiring more treatment.

It was all good, though. Nothing a victory and a fourth straight AFC West title won't cure.

Manning threw a 28-yard touchdown pass to Demaryius Thomas in the third quarter and Connor Barth kicked five field goals to lead Denver to a 22-10 victory against the San Diego Chargers on Sunday that clinched the division title.

"He was sick," running back C.J. Anderson said. "He went out there and battled. He battled the Chargers' D, battled the crowd, battled the adversity and battled himself. But he went out there and overcame it and helped us out with a 'W' today."

Manning said he first started feeling ill Saturday evening.

"I had a rough night. I'm not going to lie, it wasn't an enjoyable night," Manning said. "It came out of nowhere."

Manning came out of the game late in the second quarter. He said he was hurt while scrambling to his right and completing a pass to Emmanuel Sanders. Three plays later, he blocked linebacker Donald Butler on a run by Anderson.

The Broncos had to settle for a field goal and Manning headed to the locker room while Brock Osweiler directed a series. "I was in some discomfort and had some limitations," Manning said. "If you can't do your job, you can't move, if you hurt yourself, you hurt the team."

Manning was one of the last Broncos out of the locker room for the start of the second half, cheered on by the thousands of Broncos fans at Qualcomm Stadium.

"We were unsure at halftime to be honest with you, until Peyton made the cavalry entrance there at the start of the third quarter," coach John Fox said. "I think it's a tribute to the kind of toughness Peyton has and the kind of competitor he is that he got up and did a tremendous job in those conditions."

Osweiler was warming up "and all of a sudden I heard this loud cheer and I didn't even need to turn around. I knew exactly what it was."

Manning was back in time for Denver's first possession of the third quarter. He capped the second possession with a 28-yard touchdown pass to Thomas to give the Broncos a 16-3 lead.

Brady uses feet to provide spark

Rare scramble lifts Patriots to 6th straight division title

By HOWARD ULMAN
The Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Tom Brady was upset that his New England Patriots hardly looked like a division champion in the first half.

So upset that the slow-footed quarterback made a rare scramble for a first down that sparked them to a big third quarter and their sixth consecutive AFC East title Sunday.

"I wasn't in the best mood at that time," Brady said after a 41-13 win over the Miami Dolphins.

He and his teammates were feeling better after the Patriots became the first team in NFL history with 11 division titles in 12 years. They missed only in 2008, when Brady suffered a season-ending knee injury in the opener and Miami won the AFC East.

"Everything starts with winning your division," Patriots safety Devin McCourty said in a locker room of happy players who looked forward to more raucous celebrations. "We wanted to win big."

Leading 14-13 at halftime, Brady threw two scoring passes in the third quarter and plodded for 17 yards, the third-longest run of his career, to set up LeGarrette Blount's 3-yard touchdown on the opening drive of the second half.

"It's good to go in there and finish them off like we did," Brady said.

New England (11-3) scored on its four series of the third quarter and piled up 24 points, a team record for that period.

Miami (7-7) saw its slim postseason hopes dwindle further as it gave up a touchdown on a blocked field goal and Ryan Tannehill threw two interceptions.

"It'll probably take a miracle to get into the playoffs," Dolphins wide receiver Mike Wallace said.

The Patriots started the season with a 33-20 loss in Miami that snapped their winning streak in openers at 10 games.



STEVEN SENNE/AP

Patriots quarterback Tom Brady runs with the ball as Dolphins defensive end Oliver Vernon gives chase in the second half on Sunday. The scramble set up a touchdown.

"We've been waiting all season to get back and play this game," McCourty said.

Now they can secure home-field advantage with wins in their remaining games against the New York Jets and Buffalo Bills.

The Patriots waited a while to take control Sunday.

A horrendous final minute of the first half — three runs that gained 2 yards, a 32-yard punt return by Miami's Jarvis Landry and a 32-yard touchdown pass from Tannehill to Wallace with five seconds left — cut the Patriots lead to one point.

"We didn't play very well in the first half," New England coach Bill Belichick said. "We just took some not very good football and made it worse and then were able to do things a lot better in the second

half."

On the first play of the second half, Brady hit Rob Gronkowski for a 34-yard gain down the middle.

"You've got to start off with one play," Gronkowski said, "and start clicking from there."

The Patriots kept rolling with 10 points in 13 seconds.

Stephen Gostkowski kicked a 35-yard field goal, giving him a team record 1,160 points, two more than Adam Vinatieri. After Patrick Chung intercepted Tannehill's pass, Brady connected with Gronkowski for a 27-yard touchdown with 4:30 left in the third quarter.

Just over three minutes later, New England boosted the lead to 38-13 on Brady's 6-yard pass to Julian Edelman.

Defense, ground game help Colts clinch again

By MICHAEL MAROT
The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Andrew Luck and the Indianapolis Colts are heading back to the playoffs.

And they are bringing a strong ground game and an improving defense.

The Colts used Luck's two second-quarter touchdown passes and a time-consuming drive for a late field goal to beat the Houston Texans 17-10 on Sunday, clinching their second straight AFC South title.

"We ran the ball well and we had a good rush average," Indianapolis coach Chuck Pagano said. "Our defense did a great job stopping their run."

That's the combination Pagano has been looking for since he took the Colts' job in 2012.

Over the last part of the season, the Colts (10-4) appear to have firmed up both areas. Indy rushed for 110 yards against the Tex-

ans (7-7), including nine straight plays on a late drive for a 29-yard field goal. The Colts have rushed for 100 or more yards three times in four weeks.

The defense, meanwhile, has allowed just four touchdowns over the past four weeks — even though the Colts have been turning the ball over at an alarming rate.

And Luck has made just enough plays to help Indy win four straight. He was 18-for-34 for 187 yards with the two touchdowns and one interception against the Texans.

"They've been doing a heck of a job giving us great field position," Luck said. "We didn't necessarily capitalize on all the opportunities that our defense gave us and other stuff, but did enough."

Houston dropped to 0-13 in Indianapolis, though it certainly had chances to end that losing streak on Sunday.



DARRON CUMMINGS/AP

Colts receiver Hakeem Nicks, right, is hit by Texans defensive back Darryl Morris near the goal line after a catch during the first half in Indianapolis on Sunday.

SPORTS



Rarefied air

Kobe passes Jordan for third place on career scoring list | **NBA roundup, Page 26**

NFL: WEEK 14 TAKEAWAYS



PHOTOS BY HARRY SCHULL, JR., ABOVE, AND TONY DEJAN, BELOW/AP

Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers, above, had the worst regular-season game of his career in a 21-13 loss to the Bills in Orchard Park, N.Y. on Sunday. Browns rookie Johnny Manziel, below, also had a rough day, passing for just 80 yards with two interceptions in his first NFL start. The Browns lost 30-0 to Cincinnati.

Not their best day

Rodgers woeful; Manziel even worse

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**
The Associated Press

Aaron Rodgers' worst NFL regular-season game — two interceptions, a fumble that became an outcome-sealing safety, zero touchdown passes, only 17 completions on 42 attempts — slowed his Green Bay Packers' trot to a playoff spot.

Might have cost him some MVP votes, too. "It wasn't my best day," Rodgers said, "by any stretch of the imagination."

Rodgers, who had three picks all season until Sunday, and his pass-dropping receivers had a rough time in a 21-13 loss at Buffalo that ended the Packers' five-game winning streak and dropped them to 10-4, the same record as Detroit in the NFC North.

With Green Bay facing a bad Bucs team next week, while the Lions take on the dysfunctional Bears, that division's champion should be decided in Week 17, when Detroit is at Green Bay.

SEE BEST ON PAGE 29



Inside: ■ Bryant's 3 TDs lead Dallas, Page 29 ■ Pats rout Miami, Page 31

Who's next in line to bring home Heisman? | Page 24

